ACPL ITEM
DISCARDED

CHRISTMAS MERRY-MAKERS

PUBLIC LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE & ALLEN CO., IND.

DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS FROM POCKET

STO V

3 1833 00785 0750

HOLIDAY COLLECTION

Date Due

St. Louis Cath.			NOV 2 7 '74

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/christmasmerryma0000mari

Christmas Merry Makers

The Willis N. Bugbee Co.
Syracuse, N. Y.

Christmas Merrymakers

By
MARIE IRISH,

THE WILLIS N. BUGBEE CO.
SYRACUSE, N. Y.

COPYRIGHT, 1929,
BY WILLIS N. BUGBEE

CONTENTS

PART I

RECITATIONS AND MONOLOGUES Page

Aunt Mary's Present 19
Best Tree, The 9
Better Than a Tree 9
Big Wish, A 5
Child's Wish 6
Christmas Scheme, A 20
Christmas Time 5
Daddy's Present 8
Disappointed Salesman, The 14
Everywhere Christmas 7
Glad He Isn't Mine 6
Glad To Be a Boy 13
Good Boy, A 7
Good Plan 6
Happy Children 9
Happy Newsboy, A 15
Helpful Mistake, A 25
How Sad 6
Jolly Christmas 9
Looking For Santa Claus 11
Loud Greeting, A 5
Morning After Christmas, The 23
My Christmas So Far 11
My Gift To You 8
No Handkerchiefs 22
Poor Little Hezekiah 20
Radio Christmas 16
Real Surprise, A 21
Telephone Call, A 12
Welcome, A 13
What's In a Name? 10
What They Want 8
When Christmas Is Over 10

DRILLS AND PAGEANTS

Christmas Cheer I-O-S (Drill) 30
Merry Maiden's March, The (Drill) 33
When Christmas Comes (Pageant) 27

DEC 19 1947
CO. SCHOOLS
C136360

SONGS

Page

Blessed Day, The 40
Christmas Toys, The 38
Christmas Tree, The 37
Everybody Smile 37
Heigh-Oh, My Friend 40
Running Errands 39
Secrets 39

TABLEAUX

Close of Christmas Day, The 42
Helping Santa Claus 42
Pa Looks Pleasant 41
Sweets To the Sweets 41
Three Graces, The 43

PART II

EXERCISES

Best Day of All 44
Christmas Long Ago 45
Do Your Part 50
Everyone's Thinking of Christmas 49
Our Holidays 46
Preparing For Christmas 44
Thinking of Others 47
What It Stands For 48
Why Keep Christmas 46

DIALOGUES

Christmas At Sand's Flats 76
Daddy's Christmas Surprise 56
Everybody Satisfied 69
Grandma's Old-Fashioned Christmas 60
Making Believe 53
'Mericano Christmas, The 51
Rowe's Christmas Guests, The 84

PART III

MISCELLANEOUS—FOR CHURCHES, SUNDAY SCHOOLS, ETC.

Candle Lighting Time (Drill) 107
Coming of the King, The (Pageant) 95
First Christmas, The (Pageant) 101
O Come, All Ye Faithful (Pantomime) 104
Scenes From Long Ago (Dialogue) 105
Voices From the Past (Pageant) 98

Christmas Merry Makers

Part I

RECITATIONS, MONOLOGUES, PAGEANTS, DRILLS, SONGS, TABLEAUX

A BIG WISH

(*For a little girl*)

A very Merry Christmas
I wish for you one and all,
And that is a big, big wish
For one who's so young and small.

A LOUD GREETING

Merry Christmas cry the children
From the east out to the west,
While those of the north and south land
Call Merry Christmas like the rest.

If these children all together
Could greet you with one great sound,
The call of their "Merry Christmas"
Would echo the whole world around.

CHRISTMAS TIME

Good things on the pantry shelves,
For company to eat,
House trimmed up with Christmas greens,
Looking fine and neat;

Secrets hidden here and there,
All ready for the giving—
Now tell me, isn't Christmas
A day that's well worth living?
Oh, boy, yes!

GOOD PLAN

(*For small boy*)

I feel so very merry
I don't know what to do
'Less I let off steam by yelling
MERRY CHRISTMAS to all of you!
(*Very loud voice.*)

GLAD HE ISN'T MINE

Santa Claus brought Bessie Brown
A baby brother so *red,*
With a funny little nose,
And not a hair on his head.

He makes homely faces an' cries,
He's naughty as he can be—
Not *half so nice* as the dolly
That Santa Claus brought to me.

A CHILD'S WISH

Merry Christmas, folks,
Here's my wish for you,
That you may be happy
The whole day through.

HOW SAD

(*For girl carrying three battered dolls*)

Evangeline has lost an eye,
Marie has lost an arm,
While Harriet a dozen times
This year has come to harm.

If *I* wore out as dollies do
How sad my mother'd be;
She'd have to get another girl
To take the place of me.

A GOOD BOY

Guess I'll get forty-leven presents
This Christmas; at least I should,
Because for days, and days, and *days*
I have been so *very* good.

Just ask my folks. I've been so good
They didn't know what to think.
They were 'fraid I was getting sick,
For I've hardly dared to *wink.*
(*Winks at audience with roguish grin.*)

EVERYWHERE CHRISTMAS

Christmas day is coming
Where there are fields of snow;
Coming to the southland
Where flowers brightly glow.
But whether winds blow chilly
Or skies be blue or gray,
You'll find the world is keeping
Its Christmas holiday.

Christmas coming where the streams
Are locked in icy tomb;
Coming to the sunny climes
Where trees are sweet with bloom;
Whatever be the weather
You will find the girls and boys
Waiting with smiling faces
For good Santa and his toys.

MY GIFT TO YOU

(*For a little girl*)

I'm just a little tot,
Of money I have none,
But I bring a Christmas greeting,
Friends, to you every one.

I'm just a little tot,
But I can bring you this,
A sunny Christmas smile,
(*Smiles broadly.*)
And a loving kiss.
(*Throws a kiss to right and one to left.*)

WHAT THEY WANT

Chickadee wants seeds for Christmas,
Towser wants some meat,
Kitty wants her saucer full
Of milk that's creamy and sweet.
Daddy Squirrel wants hickory nuts,
Mr. Rooster wants some wheat,
But I want candy, books, and toys,
A ball, and a coaster fleet.

DADDY'S PRESENT

I heard my mama say she thought
It surely was her duty
To give daddy a silver teapot
For Christmas, a perfect beauty.

She said this was the present
She thought she ought to choose
'Cause the teapot would be so lovely
For mama to have to use.

So I think that *I'll* give daddy
For Christmas a nice dolly,
Then I can have it to play with—
I'm sure that will be jolly.

HAPPY CHILDREN

Joy! Joy! Joy! Children are full of joy!
'Tis a happy time for each girl and boy;
For our land from sea to shining sea,
Is keeping now the Christmas jubilee.

Sing! Sing! Sing! Let children's voices ring,
Christmas is the world's best holiday;
Happy boys and girls, where'er they may be,
Are keeping now the Yuletide jubilee.

THE BEST TREE

I like birch trees,
  I like poplars tall,
But I like Christmas trees
  The best of all.

I like apples red,
  I like cherries small,
But fruit from the Christmas tree
  I like best of all.

JOLLY CHRISTMAS

The grown-ups they get hankies,
  Coasters for the little boys;
For all the little children
  Something up-to-date in toys.

For every little girl
  A charming, bright-eyed dolly;
Nuts and candy for us all—
  Isn't Christmas jolly?

BETTER THAN A TREE

Christmas trees are beautiful,
  Boughs of green a-glow with lights;
Branches bearing dolls and toys
  Are most enchanting sights.

But give to me a chance to hang
A stocking on the wall,
A long one of my mother's
Because my own's too small.

On Christmas morning I pull out
The packets large and small,
Left there by good old Santa Claus,
In the stocking on the wall.

WHEN CHRISTMAS IS OVER

That smarty of a Jim Cleaver,
Who lives across the way,
Called me a pie-faced mutt,
And made faces at me today.

He's one of the meanest hoboes
Who ever lived in a town;
He tried to trip me up at school
And almost threw me down.

Did I give the boob a licking?
Well,—er, not yet, because
I am on my good behaviour,
To please Mr. Santa Claus.

We boys must be kind and polite
If we want nice presents from him,
But soon as Christmas is over
(*Doubles up fists and makes fighting motions.*)
I'll sure *lick time* out of Jim.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

BY JAMES ROWE

(*Recitation for two small children*)

GIRL.

My daddy calls me "Sweetheart"
And says his life I crown
With joy, and that I'm better
Than any child in town.

BOY.

My daddy calls me "Sugar,"
But when he wears a frown
And I am kind o' noisy—
Well, then he calls me down.

LOOKING FOR SANTA CLAUS

BY JAMES ROWE

I'm looking out for Santa Claus
As any good boy should,
Expecting lots of gifts because
I know I've been quite good.

I've done my best to please my pa
By doing things just right;
I've tried hard too to please my ma
By keeping clean and bright.

I've made a few mistakes, I know.
Of course, that isn't nice.
And ma has jawed a time or so
And pa has licked me twice.

But in a note to Santa Claus
I've told him all today,
Because—because—oh, well, because
He knows it, anyway.

But he was once a boy, and so
My case is understood.
He'll come to me all right, I know,
And treat me pretty good.

MY CHRISTMAS SO FAR

BY JAMES ROWE

My Christmas has been happy,
So far.
Just suits this little chappie,
So far.

I've had a lot o' candy,
And presents that come handy.
Yes, sir—it's been a dandy,—
So far.

Ma shows me that I've pleased her
So far;
She says I haven't teased her,
So far;
And that I've not been funny,
And still she calls me "sonny,"
"Her little boy," and "honey,"
So far.

But then I've raised no riot,
So far;
I've just been good and quiet,
So far;
And sister hasn't tricked me,
And brother hasn't kicked me,
And daddy hasn't licked me,
So far.

A TELEPHONE CALL

(*If available have part of a desk phone and sit at table while talking; otherwise fix a wall phone—a small can and a string can answer.*)

Hello, Central, will you give me 2067 Iceburgville, North Pole. (*Pause.*) Hello, who is this speaking, please? Mrs. Santa Claus? Well, is Santa there, Mrs. Claus? I'd like to speak to him, please. (*Pause.*) Oh, is this you, Santa Claus? I thought you'd like to know what I want for Christmas—so's not to have to wonder what to bring me. I'd like some mechanical toys, like an elephant that walks and swings its trunk when it's wound up—two or three toys like that, Santa, and a watch so I won't be late for school. It makes our teacher awful cross when we're tardy. And some story books—real snappy ones, please, 'bout Injuns and wild cats and all such. And a ball, and a bat, and a ball mitt, and some roller skates,

some that don't let your feet go out from under you so easy, if you have that kind, Santa Claus, and a good stout football, and a harmonica—one that's easy to learn to play, and—what's that? You think I've asked for enough? Well, say, Santa Claus, can't you bring Grandma a good swift scooter? You think she's too old to use it? Well, I thought I could use it, 'count of her having rheumatiz, you know. And Santa Claus, can't you bring ma an air gun? You don't see what she'd want of it? Why, I can use it for her, to kill sparrows in the back yard. They bother her an awful lot. What? Oh, you have to go over to the doll factory? All right, Santa Claus. Goodbye.

GLAD TO BE A BOY

Gee, I'm glad I'm not a girl
  When Santa comes with his toys;
He hasn't half as nice presents
  For girls as he has for boys.

Who wants a string of beads,
  Or dishes of very small size?
Who wants a silly dolly
  That opens and shuts its eyes?

A toolbox with hammer and saw,
  Gun, drum, a baseball and bat,
Steel bars for towers and bridges,
  A punch-bag to keep down the fat—

These are the presents that fill
  Young hearts plumb full of joy;
So when Christmas time draws near—
  Gee, I'm glad that I'm a boy!

A WELCOME

We welcome the Christmas season
  With its songs and greetings gay,
And we welcome you, dear friends,
  Who are gathered here today.

We welcome good Santa Claus
Who distributes Christmas cheer,
And we welcome you, dear friends,
Who are meeting with us here.

We welcome the Christmas spirit,
Whose love is boundless and great,
And we welcome you, dear friends,
Who are here to help celebrate.

THE DISAPPOINTED SALESMAN

An enterprising young man
From the town of Kalamazoo,
Hopped into his aeroplane,
And off to the Northland flew.

"I'll sell Santa Claus an airship,"
He said with a businesslike smile,
"So that when he comes next Christmas
He can make the trip in style."

He found the old man out picking
Bushels of ripe sugar plums;
He gave him a fine business talk
While Santa twiddled his thumbs.

"It sounds pretty good," said Santa,
"And if I have an airship
It certainly will not take long
To accomplish my Christmas trip."

"Come for a ride," said the salesman.
"Just find out how easy 'twill be
To fly from your home at the Pole
Down to Boston or Kankakee."

They started off smooth as you please,
And merrily onward did fly
Till they struck a sudden blizzard
That was galloping through the sky.

"Great cyclones! This gale," said the salesman
"Is more than my aeroplane will stand;"
So he turned it right-round about
And hastily headed for land.

For three days the clouds and the wind
Kept the fellow waiting to start,
And he eyed the North Pole weather
With murderous thoughts in his heart.

"Nothing doing, young man," said Santa.
"I'll make my journey each year
In the good old reliable way,
With my sleigh and my trusty reindeer."

A HAPPY NEWSBOY

I met him in the street car,
On a morning raw and cold,
A newsboy with his papers,
All the little man could hold.

His clothes were thin and scanty,
And his chapped hands were a sight,
But his roguish face was smiling,
And his eyes were dancing bright.

"Fine Christmas weather, ain't it?"
He said with a grin to me;
"I s'pose that stuff you're totin'
Will go on a Christmas tree.

"Oh, yes-sirree, I like Christmas—
Best day of all the year.
I surely like to be livin'
With all this bustle an' cheer.

"Why mind a little cold weather?
My papers will sell quite fast,
Then I'll do some Christmas shoppin'
When I've got rid of the last.

"We're goin' to have a small tree,
Sister, an' brother, an' me,
The way we've got it trimmed up—
It would do you good to see.

"I've bought a doll for sister,
For brother a horn an' a ball,
An' for mother—you see, she's sickly,
I've got a warm little shawl.

"Little Tim's comin' over for dinner—
He's a newsie who's all alone;
We're goin' to have some *grand* soup,
With a lot of meat on the bone.

"This corner is where I get off;
A Merry Christmas to you,"
And he left the car with a smile,
And laughed as the wind pierced him through.

Oh, merry little newsboy,
Brave boy with a heart of gold,
Glowing with Christmas spirit,
As he shivers in the cold.

A RADIO CHRISTMAS

Martha Vincent sat by the window, sighing as she gazed through the gray of the December day. Christmas coming tomorrow and what of joy was the day to bring her? Harriet, her daughter, had written that it was simply impossible for her to leave; she was singing in the Christmas concert and again in the church on Christmas day. Henry, her son, who was a city pastor in charge of a thriving church, had sent word that since he was taking an active part in the Christmas program of his church, he would be unable to spend Christmas with her. Spend the day alone when her heart was hungry for her son and daughter. Martha Vincent found it hard to be cheerful.

Some one stopping at her house; some one unloading a crate and some packages. A mistake, perhaps. Then a knock at the door which Martha answered. "A Christmas present for you, Mrs. Vincent," the man explained. "It's from your son and daughter. They sent it to me and I'm to get it set up so you'll have a Christmas concert tonight. It's a splendid radio and you'll have a merry Christmas with it." He went briskly to work. "It's all ready, Mrs. Vincent," he announced some time later. "It will give you service from Los Angeles to Boston. Merry Christmas to you," and he was gone.

A radio. Martha Vincent eyed it gloomily. It must have cost a lot of money—altogether too much for the children to spend on her. She could have done very well without it. She hadn't been much impressed with the concert she heard over the radio at a neighbor's. Well, it was here, ready to use; might as well accept it gracefully and Martha sighed again. One had to put up with whatever these modern children did and if they wanted her to have a radio—all right.

Another knock at the door. A telegram this time. There had been occasions when a telegram frightened Mrs. Vincent shockingly, bringing a certainty of calamity; but since the children persisted in sending her greetings and bits of information by telegram she had come to look upon them as quite harmless. She opened the telegram and sat staring at a queer looking jumble of letters. What did it all mean? Tune in on—here followed a portion of the alphabet; also get—and followed some more alphabet. She straightened it all out presently; those were the radio stations where Harriet and Henry lived. Martha began to get excited. Perhaps she was to hear the programs in which her children were to take part.

She read the instructions which came with the radio but she decided to take no chances. Sam Jackson, next door, knew all about radios; she would have him over to run it for her. She didn't want to miss any joy that might be meant for her —Christmas joy from that radio program. So Sam came over when it was time and Martha Vincent sat in her old-fashioned rocker, waiting. They were to get the Christmas eve program from her son's church, first. "Here we are,"

Sam announced, and the music filled the room. Then a voice, that voice so dear to her, came to the mother as her son read the Christmas Scripture:

> "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night."

There was more music, then when he took the prophet's part in the pageant, Martha Vincent thrilled to his words:

> "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

She sat with closed eyes, thanking God that Henry, her boy, could take his part in the world's great Christmas celebration. "Time to try for that other station now," Sam told her. "Where's that telegram? I don't want to make a mistake." The violin solo was nearly over and then the melody of an old Christmas hymn came sweetly to Martha Vincent's heart, and her daughter's voice sang:

> "Hark! the herald angels sing,
> Glory to the new-born King!
> Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
> God and sinners reconciled."

The mother could have cried out pleadingly, as the song finished, for another old favorite; and as if in answer to her silent thought the organ pealed forth its notes and Harriet sang:

> "It came upon the midnight clear,
> That glorious song of old,
> From angels bending near the earth
> To touch their harps of gold."

It was late that night that a happy mother sat in the candle light of Christmas eve, thanking God that hers was a joyous Christmas for on the morrow the radio would again bring to her these, her children, who were serving mankind.

AUNT MARY'S PRESENT

(*Speaker stands back of small table, pretending to use paste, seals, ribbon, cord, etc., while talking.*)

Now, I *must* do up this box for Aunt Mary. This is a good-looking box. (*Hand up, as if holding it.*) I *do* like a nice box for sending Christmas presents. I'm going to wrap this very artistically. Aunt Mary is so fastidious; she loves to have things prettily wrapped. (*Makes as if wrapping box.*) First, this tissue paper, then tie it with this attractive narrow red and green ribbon. Now, about three of these Christmas seals—the *dearest* little ones. I hope Aunt Mary notices them before she opens the box. Now, doesn't this look Christmasy? (*Makes as if holding box up to look at it.*)

I'm sure Aunt Mary will enjoy this bottle of choice perfume. She is fond of pretty things and this bottle is really a beautiful shape. The bottle alone is a present, without the perfume. They do make the most wonderfully attractive bottles nowdays. Now, I must wrap this with some of this holly paper. I'm going to get it folded on just too neatly for words. I don't like folks who send messy-looking packages. (*Makes as if wrapping box.*) This is going to look as if a real expert wrapped it. Now, some more seals—bright ones, that the postman will think are pretty. Where is the card I addressed? (*Makes as if hunting on table.*) Here it is. I'll paste it on, then the package is ready to mail. There, it's all ready. (*Makes as if holding up package.*) Isn't it nifty looking? Aunt Mary will just sit and gaze at it, thinking it's too pretty to open, I know she will. That's the way Christmas packages should look—a joy without, as well as within.

I'll mail this today—one more gift off my mind. Oh! (*Shrieks.*) Oh-h, George, come—here. The most *frightful* thing has happened. Yes, I'm hurt—no, no, I mean I'm not hurt, but—oh, I could have a—fit. (*Stamps foot and shrieks Oh-h-h-h-h.*) *Of course* there's something the matter. I have the most *beautiful* bottle of perfume wrapped just *perfectly*, ready to mail, and I—I—forgot to PUT THE BOTTLE IN THE BOX!

POOR LITTLE HEZEKIAH

Ah, I sure am proud and happy. I'll say, happy and very proud. My first son has arrived, our first child, a wonderful boy, born on Christmas eve. No wonder I feel like walking on air. (*Paces proudly.*) He is a fine looking fellow—somewhat red, of course, but he has a noble brow. I'm sure he will have a splendid mind—be a scientist perhaps, or a writer. Such a very merry Christmas for us.

There is just one drawback to my joy. It makes me feel like a bag of gloom to think of it. This little Christmas son must bear the name of—Hezekiah. *Hezekiah!* Isn't that enough to give the boy the colic? A noble child like him shackled for life with the name of Hezekiah. I could weep—almost.

No, indeed, I'm not to blame for this atrocious selection. The blame is on my wife, now and forevermore. She's a bright, fine-looking young woman, my wife, and you'd never suspect her of being guilty of—Hezekiah. She looks, well, as if she might favor Algernon, or Archibald, or Donovan. Something picturesque and poetic, you understand.

Well, it's this way. Up in Clay Corners, in the rugged backwoods of Vermont, my wife has an uncle, a granite-headed old fellow whose name is Hezekiah, and he deserves it, too. His one redeeming trait is that he has money—money in the bank, mortgages on farms, stocks in safe companies, bonds as good as gold. Do you begin to see daylight? That's why my smart, good-looking little son must wear the name of Hezekiah. My wife considers herself this Uncle's favorite niece and her son will be his heir. Well, maybe *so*—but, he'll earn it. My Christmas day is ruined. Poor little Hez-e-kiyah, may the angels e'er watch nigh yah! You'll need it.

A CHRISTMAS SCHEME

Ha, ha, ha! I consider that I've just tried a neat little scheme on Uncle Joseph. I've saved myself some money and disposed of a useless left-over from last Christmas. Uncle Joseph sent me one of the most atrocious neckties last Christmas that you ever laid eyes on—the colors would have made a zebra sigh;

and as for wearing it in polite society, well, I never dared try it. I suppose he liked it or he wouldn't have bought it for me; so I sent it back to him today for a Christmas present from me. He'll never remember that it's the one he sent me; he forgets things like that over night, and he's sure to admire my taste in colors and design. He'll likely think it's one of the nicest presents I've ever given him. I think I'm clever to think of sending it back. A good scheme, I flatter myself.

I wonder what Uncle Joseph will send me. I wish he'd get generous this year and send me a real gift—a fine watch would be very acceptable. I need a new one. How fine these folks are who send presents that look like a real bonanza to you. Ah, there's the mailman at last. He's late today—heavy Christmas mail, I suppose. I wonder what he left me. (*Calls.*) Oh, Jane, bring in my mail, will you? (*Goes over; makes as if taking mail.*) Thank you, Jane. Yes, that's all now, thank you. (*Makes as if looking mail over.*) Well, well, here's a package from Uncle Joseph. I wonder what he has sent me. Now if it *should* happen to be that watch—what luck! (*Makes as if opening package.*) It's—why—well, of all things! The brazen-faced old reprobate. To think of his playing a trick like that on me. He has sent me back the book of Daily Readings I sent him last Christmas. (*Pretends to read card.*) Hopes I'll enjoy it every day in the year. Well, I have my opinion of one who'll do a thing like *that.* Of course, he forgot I sent it to him, but what's the idea—sending out junk that has laid around for a year. The mean old alligator. I'm off with him for life!

A REAL SURPRISE

(*Holds up hand as if with package; looks at it musingly.*) Well, here is a present from Aunt Jemima. I wonder what she has sent this year. One thing I do know—it isn't much of a gift. She's saving, Aunt Jemima is. She has ever so much property, and ever so many bonds, and ever so many investments that pay well, so people say. I imagine this is—maybe a calendar.

Why do people hate so to part with their money when they have so much they can't possibly ever use it up? Why not

give it to their poor relations and make them happy? Now, if *I* were Aunt Jemima, and had a poor relative like me who needed money, I would make her a Christmas present of one hundred dollars, instead of a calendar or a handkerchief. Yes, I'm sure I'd be generous.

I wonder what I'd do with a hundred dollars if I had it, right now to use. (*Thinks.*) I'd—well, of course I'd have a new dress, a becoming one that looked as if it were made just for me. I'd have some new books—the kind I like and can't afford to buy, because good books of travel come high. And —oh, yes, I'd have my teeth fixed up. No joy in that prospect because I do dread the dentist, but I need some work done and have been wondering how I was to afford it.

Then I'd put some in the savings bank. Every one should save some money, if they can get it to save, which I haven't been able to, because money is a very present help in time of financial need. Oh, dear, why couldn't Aunt Jemima have taken a generous streak and sent me a real present? She knows she can't live long.

I may as well see what this is. I'm glad she at least remembered I'm still here. (*Makes as if opening package.*) A—A Why—am I dreaming? A bond for—five—hundred—dollars! To—me! Why, dear, lovely, blessed Aunt Jemima! Isn't she wonderful?

NO HANDKERCHIEFS

I don't know just what I shall give folks this year but of one thing I'm certain—I shall *not* include handkerchiefs among my gifts. It is positively tiresome the way folks give handkerchiefs for Christmas. If they don't know what else to give, instead of looking about for some more acceptable present, they fill in with hankies. Of course they *are* necessary and always come in handy, but I consider them a last minute resort when it comes to Christmas presents.

Now, I better begin to plan my list. I've waited until the last minute, as usual. I don't see why I didn't decide on my gifts two weeks ago, and have part of them purchased by this time. (*Sits down with a sigh.*) Why not take the most diffi-

cult ones first? It's easy enough to think of something for mother—dishes or linen, and father usually needs a new shirt, but what shall I get for Uncle Peter? Books are nice presents but—well, good ones cost so much. A pipe would make a good present but he doesn't smoke. He doesn't need new ties—he just bought himself several. What can I give him? Dear me, it just makes my head ache to have to think so hard. I'll—oh, it doesn't matter; I'll just get him a nice handkerchief. It won't hurt to put one hanky on my list.

Aunt Alice is next. What *can* I select for her? She has everything she needs and everything that comes under the line of acceptable Christmas presents. I'd like to give her a camera but of course I can't afford to get anything so expensive. What will please her? (*Thinks.*) I might get her a pretty apron but she has never worn the one I gave her last Christmas. This is so exasperating! My brain is worn out with this effort of deciding on presents—or trying to. (*Sighs.*) Well, I think I'll give her a—handkerchief. There are some beauties in Cox and Randall's, and of course I'm not expected to know that she has a box full of hankies that she has never used. Yes, I'll get her a dainty handkerchief.

I ought to decide on something for cousin Maude, but I'm just worn to a frazzle with all this hard thinking. I don't believe it's good for me to tire myself out. There *are* folks who think it isn't good form to give handkerchiefs for Christmas presents, but I don't see why. I think it's real sensible myself. I'll just get as many as I need and let it go at that. (*Happily.*) What a relief to have it settled. Christmas presents are such a bother. I don't know *what* I'd do if Christmas came more than once a year.

THE MORNING AFTER CHRISTMAS

Come in, Mrs. Brown, that is, if you can get in. The house is so cluttered up I don't know when I'll get it put to rights, but what can we expect, just after Christmas? No, no, don't sit on that chair—there's a box of chocolates under the cushion and you'd sure smash them if you sat on them. I slipped them under the cushion to hide them from Mary. I

was afraid she'd make herself sick. Just wait till I take Bessie's new doll out of this rocking chair and you can sit here. Don't trip over that train of cars. I should have made the children pick up their things but they were so anxious to go out and try their new sled.

Dear me, yes, Christmas is a lot of bother, but think how much pleasure we get out of it. It's just the merriest day of the whole year. No, I don't feel so very well today. The truth is, I was up half the night with Jimmy. Yes, he was sick. Oh, no, nothing serious. He ate too much turkey and plum pudding and mince pie, and too much candy and nuts. You know he never did have a very strong stomach and I was so busy I didn't notice how much he was eating. Yes, he's lots better today and he didn't mind being sick—he thought it was worth it, having all those good things to eat. Yes, Christmas is a wonderful day, and the eating is one of the nice things about it, with so much candy and stuff around, you know.

Yes, we got lots of nice presents. We gave the children ever so much more than we could afford to, but then, it's only once a year and we do like to see them happy. Every one should have a merry Christmas whether they can afford it or not. No, things don't last long. The children have broken a number of their presents already, but they enjoyed getting them, so what's the difference, so long as it's Christmas? I do like to see the dears happy.

No, I don't know what that is, Mrs. Brown. It's a Christmas present from my sister Emma, and I can't figure out what it's meant for, but it looks real nice there on the shelf, don't you think so? I don't s'pose it matters what it's for, so long as it's a Christmas present. I was ever so glad to get it. It wouldn't seem just like Christmas if I didn't get something from Emma, you know. Last year she sent me a nice book. Well, I've never read it yet. I've thought a lot of times that I'd get around to read some of it, but you know how 'tis when a woman has so much to do. Anyway, it's a nice looking book.

Yes, I *am* tired today, what with all that company yesterday and so much to do and the children so excited, and all. I guess I overdid, but it wouldn't seem like Christmas, I

s'pose, if I didn't get all tired out and one doesn't mind, as long as it's Merry Christmas. I don't mind being tired when we had such a grand time, and it only comes once a year.

What, must you go? I don't wonder you don't want to stay in such a looking house, but what can one expect, the day after Christmas? We surely had a *wonderful* time.

A HELPFUL MISTAKE

I wish I knew what the doctor has decided about me. It is nerve-racking, this suspense of not knowing whether I'm a really sick man with an incurable malady, or whether my case can be helped. (*Paces back and forth.*) I don't see why I haven't heard from Doctor Ellison; he promised to let me know in a few days what the results of his examination were. I—I wonder why I can't call him up and see what he found out. (*Pauses, undecided.*) I—he may not like it, but I'm going to call. (*Goes to telephone.*) Give me 96, please. Yes. 9—6. Hello, Doctor Ellison's office? The doctor is out? I see. You're his assistant? Well, I don't know whether you can tell me what I want to know. I see. Well, the doctor gave me an extensive examination the other day and I'm wondering—well, whether I'm going to live or die. He has some reports written out? Perhaps you can find mine—Jones is the name, yes. Calvin Jones. You'll look it up? Thank you. Yes, I'll hold the phone. (*Pause.*) I wonder what she will find. (*Sighs.*)

Yes. Yes, this is Jones. Did you find the Doctor's diagnosis of my case? You did? I'm glad. Tell me what it says, please. What? You rather not tell me? That must mean—does—it must be unfavorable? Not very encouraging? I see. (*Bracing up.*) Please give me the report as the Doctor has it. I'm—I want to know the *worst*. Yes, the worst. Now, please. (*Listens.*) Again, please. Incurable malady? Short time to live? Thank you. No, that's all right. Goodbye.

(*Sinking into chair.*) So—that—is it. The end of life. A merry Christmas I'll have tomorrow with that sentence on my mind. If I'm—I'm *that* bad I may not be alive tomorrow. (*Sadly, head on hand.*) Snapped off when I had supposed

until last week that I was a well man. (*Rises.*) Here it is, almost Christmas, and no presents sent off. I was going to find something for Tom and each of my sisters—they'll expect a little remembrance. (*Muses.*) Wonder what they'll like. (*Suddenly.*) Why, if I'm at the end of life I have no use for what I've saved. I may as well make them a good Christmas present. (*Gets check book and sits at table.*) There's good old Tom working his life out on that farm, barely making a living. (*Writes check.*) I'm going to send him five thousand dollars. That'll help some. Don't see why I didn't do this before instead of being so selfish.

Neither of the girls are very well fixed. They can use a little cash. (*Writes two more checks.*) They used to be mighty good to me when I was a boy at home. Here's five thousand for each of them. I hope they'll both get some nifty new clothes. I'll write a letter to each of the three this evening and tell them to have some good times with these Christmas presents.

(*Rising and coming forward.*) I don't feel as if I'm about to die—but one can't tell; those things come suddenly. At any rate I feel a lot happier since I've written those checks for Tom and the girls. I do wish I had helped them before. Why didn't I have more Christmas spirit years ago? Selfish old piker that I was. (*Telephone rings; he goes over.*)

Yes, this is Jones. Yes. Oh, from Doctor Ellison's office? I see. No, my name is Calvin—Calvin, not Caleb. You read me the wrong report? Doctor finds nothing serious the matter with me? Some treatments will put me in good shape? I see. Yes, thank you. (*Hangs up; comes up, speaks happily.*) Now what do you think of that? Have a fellow almost buried and then tell him he's all right. Got me mixed up with a Caleb Jones—Caleb instead of Calvin. Well, well, I think I know who's going to spend a merry Christmas. My crickety, I know what I'll do—jump on the train and take those checks to Tom and my sisters. They'll be glad to see me and we'll have an old-fashioned Christmas.

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES

(*For from twelve to twenty children, according to the number in the groups.*)

READER (*off stage*).

When Christmas comes a-marching
Down Winter's frosty way,
We hear the carols ringing,
And thus we hear them say:

CHORUS (*off stage.* TUNE: *Jolly Old Saint Nicholas*).

Welcome, welcome Christmas time,
Glad you're here again;
You are dear to girls and boys,
And to grown-up men;
Welcome, welcome Christmas time,
Glad that you are here,
For you fill our hearts with joy,
Fill our homes with cheer.

READER.

Santa Claus is coming,
That jolly, kindly man,
Who sets the world a-smiling
As only Santa can.
He comes from Santa-clausville,
Ten million gifts to bring;
The children are so happy
That thus we hear them sing:

CHORUS (*off stage.* TUNE: *Up On the House Top*).

Nearer and nearer Christmas draws,
Soon comes dear old Santa Claus;
He's loaded down with drums, balls and bats,
Tea-sets and puppy-dogs, fuzzy cats.
Click, click, click, his reindeer fly;
Clack, clack, clack, he'll soon pass by,
Leaving some gifts for you and me,
Filling stockings and Christmas tree.

READER.

Christmas time is candy time,
Candy hard and shiny,
Candy round and plump and soft,
Candy large and tiny.
Candy by the sackful,
The bagful, the barrelful;
All the children Santa meets
Are filled up with Christmas sweets.

(*A group of Candy Girls come running on. All wear white gowns trimmed with flowing sash and large ruffled collar of crepe paper with little cap to match, one girl having orange, one red, one yellow, one light blue and one light green.*)

CANDY GIRLS *sing.* TUNE: *"The Birds' Return"*).
(*With spirit.*)

Christmas time is candy time,
Lollypops are handy;
Sticks in colors glowing bright,
Peppermints both green and white,
Chocolates are a great delight,
Have some Christmas candy.

(*Step forward with right foot, left hand on hip, right hand over head, arm curved gracefully, head tipped to one side, smile on face. Hold pose while music is played through gaily.*)

Christmas time is candy time,
Everybody's eating;
Sugar candies soft and sweet,
Peanut brittle hard to beat,
Maple fudges are a treat,
Bars and gumdrops meeting.

(*Hands on hips, head tilted, pass around in a circle as the melody is played, stepping forward with the foot then rising slightly on toes of that foot as the other foot is swung across in front of it. Return and halt in places.*)

Travel east or travel west,

(*Join hands, three quick steps to right, then three to the left.*)

You'll find Christmas candy;
Santa brings it pound on pound,
There's enough to go around,
All the land its praises sound,
Famous Christmas candy!

(*Join hands, run up to front of stage, bring right foot down sharply, as they halt. Bow by putting left foot with toes against right heel and bending right knee, hands on hips. Run from stage.*)

READER.

What would Yuletide be, my friends,
Without the Christmas cooks who make
Mince pie and rich plum pudding,
Cookies, bread, and frosted cake?
What would Christmas be, my friends,
If the dinner were left out,
And there were no loaded table
For the folks to gather 'bout?

(*A group of boys and girls run on, all wearing white aprons and white chef caps. They stand in semi-circle and sing to tune, "'Tis Springtime."*)

The baking, the baking,
We have it all done—
The pies and plum pudding,
The cakes every one.
With beating and stirring,

(*All make motions of beating and stirring.*)

A stir and a beat,
We have them all ready,
The good things to eat.

(*While the melody is played briskly through, each one pretends to fork up food from the left hand with the right, making motions of eating.*)

There's company coming,
The young and the old;
We'll load up the table
With all it will hold—

The pie and the pudding,
The rolls and the meat;
They're part of our Christmas,
These good things to eat.

(*The melody is played again and they go through motions as above, showing evident enjoyment, then wave hand at audience and exeunt.*)

READER.

The hours all too quickly
Flit by on golden wings,
With every one enjoying
The cheer the season brings;
When Christmas goes a-marching
Down Winter's frosty way,
And evening brings the shades of night
We hear the singers say:

CHORUS (*off stage.* TUNE: *Jolly Old Saint Nicholas.*)

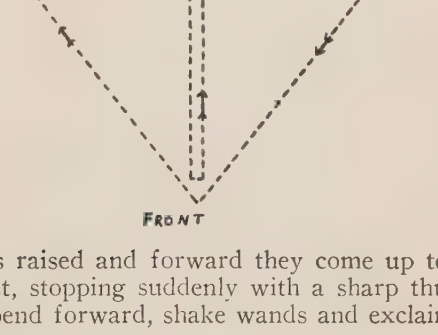
Goodbye, goodbye, Christmas day,
Sorry you must go,
We shall treasure long the joys
That your hours bestow;
Goodbye, goodbye, Christmas day,
Thank you for your cheer,
We'll be waiting anxiously
Till you come next year.

CHRISTMAS CHEER-I-O-S

A drill for nine of the smaller boys, or for part boys and part girls, the girls wearing the same costume as the boys. They wear green cotton trousers, loose, made like pajama trousers, red jackets with long sleeves wide at the bottom, double ruffle about the neck, and crepe paper caps, some red with green ruffle, others green with red ruffle.

Each one carries a wand (a cane or old umbrella handle) wound part way with green and rest with red paper, having a small bell fastened at the end so it will shake about and ring. Movements should be quick and eager, faces smiling.

To brisk music they enter in single file, tallest member for leader, at the corner of back, go to opposite corner of back, turn sharply and come back to the center of back, up the center of stage to front, double back to center of back, out to corner, diagonally to center of front, the same to other corner of back and line up across back of stage, thus:



With wands raised and forward they come up to center of stage abreast, stopping suddenly with a sharp thump of the right foot, bend forward, shake wands and exclaim:

We are the Christmas Cheer-i-o-s
We are here on our tip-toes.

Whirl about on the left foot to face back, bring right foot down with a stamp, pass abreast to back of stage, turn to face front and come up abreast to front of stage. Bend forward, shake wands and say:

Our work is to scatter Christmas cheer,
And that is the reason we are here.
Some folks at Christmas look like this:

(*Draw long faces and scowl.*)

But Cheer-i-o-s wear a smile of bliss.

(*Stand very straight, wand straight at side, grin broadly.*)

Turn to face left, pass down left side of stage, turn sharply at corner of back and double back to center of left side, and line up across the center of stage, facing front. The leader steps forward, up toward the front corner, half turns and says:

We are Christmas Cheer-i-o-s,
And we are not slow.
When we're sent on errands
Show folks how we go.

The one who stood next to leader leads the file down to right corner of back, across back of stage, up to center of left side and back to their places. They take long steps and walk rapidly, wands held at right side.

LEADER.

Now show people, if you please,
How we act and feel,
When there's a Christmas *secret,*
That we must conceal.

The file faces left and one nearest left of stage leads from center of left side, down to back, across back of stage, halfway up right side and back to places. They walk on tip-toes, slowly with cautious steps, looking from left to right, body inclined forward. The leader returns to place in the line. With wands held high and waved, they come up abreast, quick steps, to front; bend forward, wands held low and swayed from side to side; march backwards to back of stage, slow steps. On reaching back bring foot down with a stamp, straighten up and hold wand at right side.

Numbers 2, 5 and 8 remain standing at back; the others come up past center of stage, keeping line straight, holding the space made by the vacancies. When they halt, Nos. 1 and 3 face and form an arch with their raised wands, Nos. 4 and 6, and 7 and 9 do the same. When the three couples have formed arches, the three at back run up, pass under the arches (Nos. 2 under arch of 1 and 3, No. 5 under arch of 4 and 6, and 8 under the other arch) and kneel, wands somewhat raised and pointing forward. All say:

We are the jolly Cheer-i-o-s,
Dressed up in our Christmas clothes,
And with a grin like this, that shows,
(*Smile broadly.*)
Wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS.
(*Loud tone.*)

The two of each couple turn to stand back to back just behind the one kneeling, wands raised and pointing up obliquely toward side of stage each is facing. Shake them to ring bells as the three kneeling members say:

Christmas trees again are here,
Christmas bells are ringing clear,
'Tis the season of the year
When the Cheer-i-o-s scatter cheer.

Kneeling boys rise, the others step forward and form line abreast in original order. Bend forward, wands to the front, and pass backwards slowly to the back of stage. With quick steps, wands raised and waving, run up abreast to front of stage and say:

A goodbye from each Cheer-i-o,
It is time for us to go.

Half face right, others left of stage; files pass down the sides and across the back, the line from the left keeping next to back as the files pass; exeunt at corners of back.

THE MERRY MAIDENS' MARCH

A march and drill for seven of the older girls or young ladies. They wear long red stockings (old light-colored ones can be dyed) short green cheesecloth slip made like a bungalow apron. A straight full overskirt of red cheesecloth is sewed to the slip below waist line, at sides and across the back, but not across the front. This overskirt comes almost to bottom of slip at left side, but lengthens on the right side, slanting at bottom so it hangs in point below slip. It should be fuller at right side, to hang gracefully when raised. A scarf of red cheesecloth eighteen inches wide and thirty inches long is gathered at one end and sewed to form sort of a rose which is fastened to the left shoulder; the other end of scarf being fastened to a narrow band about the left wrist, so scarf raises when arm is raised, hanging down from the arm.

The leader comes on and halts at center of back, raising left hand high, the right hand, down and out at side holding edge of spread overskirt. When she is in position half of the

others enter at left corner of back, half at the right. The files pass down sides; at corners of front turn diagonally toward center of back; last girl on each file halts near corner of front, the other two on each line halting with correct spaces between them, between the corners of front and the leader at center of back, all facing front, same pose as center girl.

They take the following poses, allowing a certain number of measures of the music for each:

1. Hands out arm's length, just a little lower than shoulder height, holding up edge of overskirt in right hand, to give a spread effect, right foot back, body inclined forward.

2. Those on right raise left hand high, pointing to left, head tipped to left, face turned partly to left, right hand at hip height; those on left face back of stage, turn face to right, left hand high, right at hip height; center girl like those on right.

3. Those on left face front. All take position as in No. 1, hands sidewise so palms face each other when hands are brought together. With hands straight out from shoulder bring them slowly together until six inches apart, then back, repeating several times.

4. All kneel, head inclined forward, hands up high, obliquely from shoulders. Rise and those on sides turn to face center of back.

The center girl leads up center of stage to front; the others fall in line back of her, one from the right, then one from left, etc. They march with left hand down at side, right hand on hip. Pass from center of front out to right corner front, down right side. The leader halts at the center of back; the next three go on and halt along the left side of stage, facing the right; the last three halt along the right side of stage, facing the left.

The girl nearest back on each side moves forward; they halt in front of leader, a space between them, half facing front. Leader, holding edge of overskirt, places right hand on hip of girl at right, who has left hand held high, right extended at hip height. Girl at left places right hand on hip of the leader, her right hand raised high. At the same time that those two pass to positions, the next girl at left crosses

stage, halting in front of girl on right, while the third girl on right passes across and halts in front of girl opposite her at left. These two couples face front, stand close together, raise left hands high, the left-hand member having her arm back of the other's head, while the latter has her right hand in front of her partner, the right hands extended, somewhat below shoulder height.

After holding above pose the three at back, keeping their position, march up almost to front of stage and halt; the two at right come up to right front and kneel, keeping their pose: the two at left come up and kneel at the left front. Hold this pose. Those kneeling rise; all face the left of stage, standing in straight line, back of each other, the left hands raised high obliquely to the left, the right hands at hip height at the side of the one in front. Hold pose.

C190360 CO. SCHOOLS

The center girl, hands out at sides held rather low, moves slowly backwards down the center of stage to back; at same time the three at the left go down the left side; the three at right face right, and pass down the right side. First girl from each side halts beside center girl; the next two on each file form a line in front of the three; come up in two rows abreast to center of stage, left hand down at side, right hand on hip. The four move apart as they halt, the three standing back of the spaces, so they are in view, thus:

X X X
X X X X

They pose to express the following Christmas emotions:

SECRECY. Right hand down and out at side, left hand with finger at lips, warning look on face, body slightly forward. One of the girls says:

> Ah, the secrets that Christmas time doth hold,
> Secrets to keep, that cannot be told!

SURPRISE. Step back with right foot, throw up both hands, the left being held higher, the right further out from side, surprised look on face. A girl says:

> Oh, the surprise that Christmas time brings,
> Unexpected gifts, and all sorts of things!

VEXATION. Those on back line half turn to left, those on front to the right, one hand at center of breast, the other against cheek, a deep scowl on face. One says:

What vexation fills your soul, my friend,
When you think of gifts you forgot to send.

(*Face front again.*)

JOY. Step forward with right foot, body inclined forward, left hand raised, arm curved, above head, right hand raised and forward, smile happily, as one says:

What joys doth the Christmas time impart—
Joys, and more joys, that o'erflow the heart.

AFFECTION. Each two on the front line stand close, heads together, right-hand member with arm about the other, her right hand grasping the other's left. On back row the two each put an arm about center girl, their heads together lovingly. One says:

With affection the Christmas time grows sweet,
When friends and loved ones again may meet.

ADORATION. Do not raise overskirt, but let it hang as the hands are clasped at center of breast, face lifted, eyes raised, as one says:

For the gift of the Christ-child our hearts we raise
To God in adoration and praise.

MEMORY. Throw weight of body on the left foot, body slightly to the left, head tipped and resting on fingers of raised left hand, right hand at center of breast, eyes down, smile on face. Seventh speaker says:

When the hours of Christmas day are passed,
There are memories sweet, that fondly last.

Come to front of stage, standing in original order; pass around in a circle, hands down and out at sides, waving back and forth, then exeunt.

SONGS

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

(*For the little folks*)

(TUNE: *"The Farmer in the Dell"*)

1—The branch is on the limb,
The branch is on the limb,
Heigh oh, for Christmas oh,
The branch is on the limb.

2—The limb is on the tree,
The limb is on the tree,
Heigh oh, the Christmas tree,
The limb is on the tree.

3—The tree is in the house,
The tree is in the house,
Heigh oh, the Christmas tree,
The tree is in the house.

4—The tree is filled with gifts,
The tree is filled with gifts,
Heigh oh, the Christmas tree,
With gifts for you and me.

EVERYBODY SMILE

(TUNE: *"My Bonnie"*)

1—Oh, let us be sunny like Santa,
Let's smile like our friend, Santa Claus,
Our smiles will set other folks smiling,
Then let us keep smiling, because.

CHORUS

Smiling, smiling, smiling at Christmas
Is all the style;
Smile then, smile then, keep smiling
And sweet all the while.

2—Let's be just as jolly as Santa,
Let's laugh care and gloom from the town;
The world should be merry at Christmas,
So don't spoil your face with a frown.
—CHO.

THE CHRISTMAS TOYS

(TUNE: *"Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!"*)

(*A number of boys and girls come on, single file, wearing toys and carrying toys, each child with several. They march around the stage in a circle, singing, then line up across the back.*)

There's a glad and happy time,
'Tis the toy time of the year,
'Tis the Christmas season brimming o'er with cheer;
Toys of every kind and size
Toys the boys and girls will prize,
Santa Claus will bring and he will soon be here.

(*March up the stage abreast, one or two rows, according to size of stage and number of children, singing*:)

CHORUS

Tramp, tramp, tramp,
The toys are marching!
Cheer up, they will soon be here;
Jolly Santa Claus will come,
With gay toys for ev'ry one.
Oh, the Christmas toys, they fill our hearts with cheer.

(*Half face the right and half the left, the latter passing to left and down the left side, while the others go down the right side. They form as before across the back of stage. Begin to sing second stanza as they start down sides.*)

2. Toys for boys and toys for girls,
Tooting horns and dolls with curls;
Toys that climb and toys that run about the floor.
Some are large and some are small,
Drum and engine, kite and ball,
And they'll please you as they've pleased you oft before.

(*March up stage as before, singing chorus, then pass off.*)

RUNNING ERRANDS

(*Solo for boy or a girl*)
(TUNE: *"Gaily the Troubadour"*)
(*Carries basket on arm*)

I do the errands
From morning till dark;
I do the errands and
Think it a lark.
Oh, there are many,
So many, to run;
I do the errands and
Think it is fun.

Down to the shop for
Some thread for Aunt Sue,
Then to the store for
Some ribbon, light blue;
Mailing the presents that
Grandma gets done—
I do the errands and
Think it is fun.

Down to the store for
Some raisins and spice,
Back home to mother in
Scarcely a trice;
Christmas is coming, there's
Much to be done;
I run the errands and
Think it is fun.

SECRETS

(TUNE: *"From Every Spire on Christmas Eve"*)

Christmas, the time of secrets rare,
Of secrets hidden here and there,
In bureau drawer, on closet shelf,
Yes, there are secrets ev'rywhere.
Some large, some small, most any size,
And they are slyly stowed away
Safe from the view of searching eyes,
To wait the morn of Christmas day.

And what they are we shall not tell,
For then they would not secrets be,
But they'll look pretty when they're hung
Upon the shining Christmas tree.
Secrets are fun, but oh, the task
Of keeping them all hidden tight,
So we'll be glad for Christmas day
When all our secrets come to light.

THE BLESSED DAY

(TUNE: *"Keep the Home Fires Burning."*)

(*To be sung by nine children, each with a letter, to spell* CHRISTMAS.)

C is for the candles gleaming
H for holly glowing bright,
R for Santa's frisky reindeer,
I the ice of winter's night.
S the Santa Claus who's coming,
T the tokens he will bring,
M the music of the carols,
A the ancient songs we sing.

CHORUS

S the Savior lowly,
Keep His birthday holy,
Keep the blessed Christmas day
For His dear sake;
C-H-R-I-S-T-
M-AS is Christmas;
Let us keep this blessed day—
Merry Christmas Day.

HEIGH-OH, MY FRIEND

(TUNE: *"All Through the Night"*)

Set the Christmas bells a-ringing,
Heigh-oh, my friend;
Carols ready for the singing,
Heigh-oh, my friend;

Christmas trees their tinsels showing,
Candles in the windows glowing,
Christmas spirit daily growing,
Heigh-oh, my friend;

Here's to you a merry greeting,
Heigh-oh, my friend;
Merry hours, dear ones meeting,
Heigh-oh, my friend;
Bright fires on the hearthstone burning,
Heart to heart now fondly turning,
For the joys of Yuletide yearning,
Heigh-oh, my friend.

TABLEAUX

PA LOOKS PLEASANT

A man with an open pocketbook in hand sits at center of stage. On one side of him stands a mother, holding out hand, a determined look on her face; beside her is a little boy, hand extended; on the other side of pa is a young lady and beside her is a little girl both with hand held toward father. The latter has a pained look but is trying bravely to smile. Light is thrown on scene and these lines read:

Christmas time has come again,
Buying time, spending time;
Mollie wants another dollar,
Tommy wants a dime.
Mother just *must* have a bill,
Jane *must* send another present;
Father groans within his soul,
But tries, dear man, to look pleasant.

SWEETS TO THE SWEET

Six pretty girls in attractive light dresses pose against a dark background. The tallest two stand at center, one half facing right, the other left, each holding up a box of candy with graceful pose, smiling up at it. In front of them

is a small girl holding forward a sack of candy at which she looks happily. At the right two girls face each other each holding out a box of candy for the other to see; at left a girl holds up a large fancy box, rolling her eyes at it joyously. The following lines are read:

Yes, Christmas time is candy time,
The whole wide world will say so;
The Christmas tooth is a *sweet* tooth
And it's quite apt to stay so.
"Sweets to the sweet," says Santa Claus;
They look sweet enough, we'd say,
But they insist on candy, so
Sweets to the sweet on Christmas day.

HELPING SANTA CLAUS

Several boys and girls, some facing right, some left, the others facing the front, stand in a group, smiling brightly. Each wears wraps ready for the street, with a bit of holly or evergreen pinned on one shoulder. Each holds a good-sized basket, decorated with green paper and a large bow of red paper, filled with packages wrapped in green or white paper and tied with narrow strips of red paper, and topped with a spray of evergreen or holly. The children pose as if eager to start while these lines are read:

Here are Santa's helpers ready
To go with footsteps speedy,
To leave their Christmas packages
With lonely folks and needy.
Sunny smiles and merry greetings,
With a little gift or two,
Will provide a happy Christmas
For some friends whose joys are few.

THE CLOSE OF CHRISTMAS DAY

A sweet-faced woman in grandmotherly garb sits in an old-fashioned rocker, a book upon her knees. She presents profile to audience, and is gazing into the distance, deep

in thought, a smile upon her face. The following lines are sung by a quartette, or as a duet, off stage:

(TUNE: *"End of a Perfect Day."*)

When you come to the end of a Christmas day,
And you sit alone deep in thought,
While the carols echo still in your soul,
For the joys that the day has brought;
Then you think what the end of a Christmas day
Can mean to a happy heart,
As you smile again o'er the greetings gay
From the dear friends far apart.

THE THREE GRACES

Three pretty young ladies pose as the Graces. One wears white, well trimmed with ruffles of red and green crepe paper, one wears green with trimmings of red, the third wears red with trimmings of green. Each wears a band across the forehead with red paper roses back of the ears. Sleeves are short—or gowns sleeveless, and about the left wrist each one wears a double ruffle of green paper fastened with several red paper roses. Center Grace stands a little back of the others, the three join hands, holding them gracefully forward. Grace at the right raises right hand, curving arm, head tilted to left; Grace at left raises left hand, pointing up to left, head tilted to right. Soft light is thrown on scene and these lines read:

Here the Christmas Graces see,
Faith and Hope and Love, these three;
Faith in one's friends and all mankind,
Hope that the best in life we find;
Love that ministers to others' needs,
Love that prompts kind Christmas deeds.
Faith, Hope and Love, these Graces there be,
But Love is the greatest of the three.

PART II

EXERCISES AND DIALOGUES

PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

(*Six little folks*)

FIRST.

If you want your home to look real jolly,
Hang up a wreath of Christmas holly.

SECOND.

To further decorate the scene,
Hang up some boughs of evergreen.

THIRD.

Then to make the room look bright and gay,
Hang up some red bells for Christmas day.

FOURTH.

Also to be up-to-date and keen,
Trim up with festoons of red and green.

FIFTH.

To give a Christmasy atmosphere,
Light some candles to glow with cheer.

SIXTH.

And after you have done all that,
Fill the room with dear ones who'll merrily chat.

BEST DAY OF ALL

(*For four children*)

No. 1 (*to* No. 2).

What day do children hold most dear
Of all the days throughout the year?

No. 2 (*to* No. 1).

Oh, that's an easy one, I'll say;
The best, of course, is Christmas day.

(*to* No. 3).

What is the day when every one sends
Gifts to dear ones and greetings to friends?

No. 3 (*to* No. 2).

I know the answer, though young and small;
That day is Christmas, best day of all.

(*to* No. 4).

What day is a birthday of worldwide fame,
Of one who bears the world's greatest name?

No. 4 (*to* No. 3).

That birthday is Christmas, when came to earth
The Baby Jesus of lowly birth;
He taught a love for all—far and near,
And that makes Christmas the best day of the year.

CHRISTMAS LONG AGO

(*For four children*)

FIRST CHILD.

Upon a hillside, far away,
Under the midnight skies, they lay;

ALL.

They were the shepherds who of old
Guarded their flocks from danger and cold.

SECOND CHILD.

In the heavens, 'mid glowing light,
A host sang a wondrous song that night;

ALL.

They were the angels, singing then
Peace on earth and goodwill to men.

THIRD CHILD.

Beside a manger, on the hay,
A mother watched where a sweet babe lay.

ALL.

That was Mary, serene and mild,
And baby Jesus was the sleeping child.

FOURTH CHILD.

From far away, weary and spent,
Came the Kings of the Orient.

ALL.

They were the wise men, come to bring
Praise and rich gifts to the newborn King.

OUR HOLIDAYS

(*For three children*)

1ST.

On Valentine Day we think
About ourselves and our friends,
And enjoy the pretty token
That a dear one sends.

2ND.

On July Fourth and Thanksgiving
We think of our native land,
And recall with fond affection
The dauntless Puritan band.

3RD.

But Christmas with its glad goodwill
The whole wide world doth bind;
Its spirit brings a sympathy
And love for *all mankind*.

WHY KEEP CHRISTMAS

(*For five children*)

ALL.

Why do we keep Christmas?

FIRST CHILD.

Because it is the day when one sends
Presents to dear ones and to friends.

ALL.
Why do we keep Christmas?

SECOND CHILD.
Because company comes and 'round the table
We eat as much as we are able.

ALL.
Why do we keep Christmas?

THIRD CHILD.
So we can have a fine Christmas tree,
With candles and presents, quite lovely to see.

ALL.
Why do we keep Christmas?

FOURTH CHILD.
Because Baby Jesus upon that day
Was born in Bethlehem, far, far away.

ALL.
Why do we keep Christmas?

FIFTH CHILD.
To give to the world the spirit of love
Taught by the Christ, now in Heaven above.

ALL.
And *that's* why we keep Christmas.

THINKING OF OTHERS

1ST CHILD.
Think of others at Christmas time,
Don't be selfish as joy bells chime;
So I'm wishing Santa will bring Aunt Jane a
Husband who'll take her across the sea,
'Cause she's just as cross as cross can be,
An' always finding fault with me.

2ND CHILD.
Wish for others glad Christmas joys,
Books, and candy, and pretty toys;
So I hope Santa will bring Sue Green
A pretty dolly with eyes that shine,
Curly hair and all dressed up fine,
So she won't be teasing to play with mine.

3RD CHILD.

Wish that the children everywhere
Santa's generous gifts may share;
So I'm hoping he will bring Jim Brown
A jack knife *very* sharp and keen,
So he'll cut his finger off slick an' clean,
'Cause he teases me an' acts so mean.

WHAT IT STANDS FOR

(For seven small children, the tallest to stand at center of line, the shorter ones on either side. Each one carries an evergreen wreath sewed to a circular piece of cardboard that has a large red C in the center. If evergreen is not handy use a double ruffle of green crepe paper.)

CENTER CHILD.

What does C stand for?
(Looks toward those on right.)
I'm anxious to know.
If you have an answer
(Looks to those on left.)
Speak up and say so.

FIRST IN LINE.

C stands for Candy,
Candy tempting and sweet;
When the sacks are given out
Just watch the children eat.

SECOND IN LINE.

C stands for Candles,
In windows now a-glow,
To give a twinkling greeting
To those who passing go.

THIRD.

C stands for Company,
The dear ones who are able
To meet in glad reunion
About the festal table.

FIFTH.

C stands for Christ-child,
In Bethlehem asleep,
The Baby in the manger
Whose birthday we now keep.

SIXTH.

C stands for Children—
You'll see some of them here,
Waiting for the coming of
The best day of the year.

SEVENTH..

C stands for Christmas,
Best holiday of all,
Day beloved by young and old,
Loved by the great and small.

CENTER CHILD.

So that's what your C's stand for
I am glad to hear you say.
Let us give a toast to
Christmas, the year's best day.

ALL.

Here's to Christmas, best day ever,
Here's to Christmas, may it never
Cease to bring the world the love
Of the Christ from heaven above.

EVERYONE'S THINKING OF CHRISTMAS

(*For six children*)

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas
As the steeple bells merrily ring;

1ST CHILD.

The children are thinking of Santa
And the wonderful gifts he will bring.

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas,
The world's best-loved holiday;

2ND CHILD.

The father's are thinking forlornly
Of presents for which they must pay.

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas,
And old customs that each year are new;

3RD CHILD.

The mothers are thinking of presents
Unfinished—so much yet to do!

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas,
Its joy keeps the whole world awake;

4TH CHILD.

The cooks are thinking of company,
And all the good things they must bake.

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas,
And the Christ-child spirit holds sway;

5TH CHILD.

The old folks are thinking of children
Who're coming back home for the day.

ALL.

Everyone's thinking of Christmas,
They must or be quite out of style;

6TH CHILD.

Young and old are thinking of Santa
And wearing his Christmasy smile.

DO YOUR PART

(*For five children*)
(*All come on and stand in line.*)

1ST SPEAKER.

Do not be gloomy at Christmas time,
Meet the world with a radiant smile;
You'll be one of the popular throng,
For sad-faced folk are quite out of style;
If Old Daddy Gloom meets up with you
Flee from his presence, outstrip him a mile.

ALL.

Forget the cares that about you pile;
Do not look gloomy, smile and still *smile.*

2ND SPEAKER (*one at center of line*).

Do not be silent at Christmas time,
Join in the carols and sing them through;
Join in the greetings the world likes to hear,
"Merry Christmas, friend," and "The same to you."
There are those about you in need of cheer,
Pass on the message with words that ring true.

ALL.

This greeting the season's joys will renew,
"Merry Christmas, my friend," and "The same to you."

3RD SPEAKER (*last in the line*).

Do not be selfish at Christmas time,
Give of your substance with lavish hand,
Give where your gift will be a surprise,
And a grateful heart will understand;
Give with goodwill for all the wide world,
Keep the Christmas spirit alive in the land.

ALL.

If you want the joy of Christmas to live,
Do not be selfish; give, and still give.

SECOND *and* FOURTH IN LINE (*together*).

Do not be gloomy, do not be selfish,
Do not be silent at Christmas time;
Do your part with a merry goodwill,
As carols swell, and Christmas bells chime.

ALL.

If you would be one of the glad Christmas throng,
Just pass the spirit of Christmas along.

THE 'MERICANO CHRISTMAS

Anita and Luigo are little children of Italian parents. They should be dressed to have rather a foreign appearance. They come on and stand talking near left of stage.

ANITA. I think de 'Mericano Christmas very nice. I like it.

LUIGO. Not me. I don't like these so smart 'Mericano children who say Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas to each other, but they don't say to us. They jus' call us wops. I no lika dis land.

ANITA. I'd like a doll for Christmas like 'Mericano girls have.

LUIGO. Here come some smarty girls. Let's go 'fore dey maka fun of us.

ANITA. Let's go over there an' look in store windows. (*They move on across stage and stand at right, with backs to the left.*)

(*Enter* VIVIAN *and* RUBY, *from left, each with basket.*)

VIVIAN. Oh, Ruby, there are Luigo and Anita now. We can call them over and give them the presents we have for them.

RUBY. They seem like nice little children. They can't help it because their folks are Italians. I think it's mean in some of the children to tease them.

VIVIAN. So do I. (*Calls.*) Anita, Luigo, come here please. (ANITA *motions for* LUIGO *to come; he shakes his head meaning No. She pulls him, then they come back and meet the girls at center of front.*)

RUBY. We want to give you each a present and wish you Merry Christmas.

VIVIAN. We hope you'll like these. (*She and* RUBY *give each of them a package.*)

LUIGO. What for you give dese to us?

RUBY. Because they're Christmas presents from us. We give them because we like you.

VIVIAN. And we wish you a Merry Christmas. (*The two go off.*)

ANITA (*peeping into package*). Oh, a dolly, a dear little dolly.

LUIGO (*peeping*). Some frosted cookies. Oh, Anita, I like 'Mericano Christmas an' I like to live here. Me, I'm goin' be good 'Mericano.

MAKING BELIEVE

CHARACTERS

ELLEN	DICK	MRS. JONES
KITTIE	TIM	PETER

(*The largest girl dresses as an adult, taking the part of* MRS. JONES; PETER, *the servant is a good-sized boy; the four children are of various ages.*)

SCENE: *The* JONES *kitchen, with* MRS. JONES *and the four children present.*

MRS JONES. Ellen, you must sweep the floor and tidy up the room. I can't take time for any more work because it's time for me to go to help Mrs. Wilson. Now you be good children while I'm gone.

TIM. Ma, is tomorrow Christmas?

MRS. JONES. Yes, dear, it is.

DICK. And are we going to get some nice presents?

KITTIE. I want a nice dolly with brown eyes and curly hair.

TIM. Will Santy Claus bring me some toys?

ELLEN. Id' like to have a nice picture book.

MRS. JONES (*sadly*). Oh, dears, I wish I could give you all something nice but you mustn't expect presents this year. Since Kittie was sick it seems like I can't get caught up with my bills. Now I've got to buy some coal and next week the rent's due. Can't you forget all about Christmas?

ELLEN. Seems like we ought to have some presents and a Christmas dinner like other folks do.

KITTIE. I want a dollie.

DICK. I want a sled.

MRS. JONES. I'll try to bring home something so we can have a nice dinner. (*She has been putting on coat and hat.*) Goodbye and be good.

KITTIE. I want to kiss you goodbye. (*She kisses mother who waves to the others and hurries off.*)

ELLEN (*starting to sweep*). Dick, you pick up those blocks and hang up that cap. (*He does so.*)

DICK. Why can't Santy Claus bring us a lot of nice presents?

ELLEN. That's the way he does—forgets all about poor folks like us. I don't think it's right.

KITTIE. Won't Santy bring me a dolly?

ELLEN (*sweeping fast*). I'll tell you what let's do. Let's make believe Santa is going to bring us a lot of presents.

DICK. That will be fun. (*He gets the dust pan;* ELLEN *takes up the dirt, then puts broom away.*) Let's play now.

ELLEN. All right. (*They all sit.*) I'm going to get a ring and a book with beautiful pictures for Christmas.

KITTIE. I'm going to get a dolly that can say Mama.

DICK. Well you ought to see the splendid red sled I'm going to get. I'll go down hill faster'n any the other boys.

TIM. Will you let me ride with you?

DICK. Sure, only you'll have to hang on awful tight.

KITTIE. An' Santy is going to bring me a whole lot of candy—most a pailful.

TIM. Oh, that'll make you sick to get so much candy.

KITTIE. But I'll give all you a lot of it.

ELLEN. And I'm going to get for Christmas the prettiest pair of mittens. They'll sure keep my hands warm.

DICK. I'm going to get some, too. My mittens are all raggedy.

ELLEN. And for Christmas dinner we're going to have mince pie.

DICK. Oh, yum-yum, won't that be grand? (*Makes believe eat.*)

KITTIE. And jelly for our bread. And good meat.

TIM. It's going to be the bestest Christmas we've ever had.

DICK. And Santy is going to bring mom a new dress.

ELLEN. And a new pair of shoes. She needs new ones.

TIM. I'm going to have new shoes, too, like Jack Green's.

ELLEN. I wish this was real instead of make believe.

DICK. Boy, so do I. (*A knock is heard.*)

TIM (*jumping up*). I'll go to the door.

ELLEN (*rising*). No, you sit down. I'll go. (*He minds; she goes over and admits visitor.*) Won't you come in?

(*Enter* PETER *with filled market basket.*)

PETER. Good morning? This is where Mrs. Jones lives, isn't it?

TIM. Yes. I mean yes, sir.

PETER (*placing basket on table*). Well, I brought this basket from Mrs. Cramer. I work for her. You see, she got word from Santy Claus that he's so rushed this year he's got to have some help. My, you can't guess what lots of work old Santy has to do, trying to get presents all 'round the country. No wonder he has to have help.

KITTIE. Is that basket for us?

ELLEN. Don't ask questions. 'Tain't polite.

PETER. So, you see, Mrs. Cramer told Santy she'd help him and she's sent this basket over to be your Christmas present.

ELLEN (*politely*). Thank you. (*To the other children.*) Can't you say thank you? (*They all say thank you.*)

PETER. Now, you're not to take anything out of this basket till your mother comes home. (*Shakes finger at them.*) You remember.

DICK. Yes, sir.

PETER. Do you promise?

ELLEN. Yes, sir, we promise.

PETER. All right. I'll have to go. A Merry Christmas to you. (*Exit.*)

DICK. It won't hurt if I just peek in. (*He peeks in basket.*) Oh, yum-yum, a pie, an' presents an'—ev'rything.

ELLEN (*happily*). We're going to have a really-truly Christmas, 'stead of a make-believe one

DICK. I can't wait till mom gets home.

ELLEN. Let's go out doors and play, so's to make time pass.

KITTY. Help me get my things on. (*They start to put on wraps as curtain falls*).

CURTAIN

DADDY'S CHRISTMAS SURPRISE

CHARACTERS

MR. EDWARDS	WILLIS	*younger children*
MRS. EDWARDS	JOHN	
ELVA, *young lady daughter*	PEGGY	

SCENE: *The* EDWARDS' *living room.* MR. *and* MRS. EDWARDS *and* PEGGY *are discovered.*

MRS. EDWARDS. By the way, Henry, can't you let me have some more Christmas money? I have thought of two more presents I must buy.

MR. E. You must be paying a lot for presents this year. I've let you have enough money to buy gifts for half the town.

MRS. EDWARDS. Don't be ridiculous. You know I'm *very* careful and not the least bit inclined to extravagance. Of course Christmas is costing a lot but it is worth it.

PEGGY (*coming to* MR. E.) Oh, daddy, please give me fifty cents. I just *have* to use fifty cents for something very important.

MR. E. Probably very important. I expect Christmas will all go to smash if you don't have 'nother fifty cents. I'm tired of this endless begging for money.

PEGGY. You let me have it, daddy, and when I get big I'll pay it back to you, honest.

MR. E. You'll have forgotten all about it before the middle of January; that's how you'll pay it back.

(*Enter* ELVA.)

ELVA. I want to see you, father. I was afraid you'd be gone.

MR. E. No, I'll tell you right now you can't have any more money for Christmas presents.

ELVA (*laughing*). What a good guesser you are. How strange that you should know what I want.

MR. E. Very strange, when I can't come into the house without being set upon and held up for money.

MRS. EDWARDS. Now, Henry, you know you enjoy Christmas, just as much as the rest of us. Don't growl so.

ELVA. I need three dollars; that surely isn't much. Merely a drop in the bucket, daddy.

MR. E. Yes, but enough drops make a regular flood.

(*Enter* WILLIS *and* JOHN.)

WILLIS. Say, Pop, how's the chance for raising a little money? I've just sure got to have a little more.

JOHN. Me, too. I haven't spent much yet. Jimmy Brown has spent three times what I have and he's going to ask his pa for five dollars more. That's an awful lot.

MR. E. I knew you two would be here begging with the rest. You folks must think I'm running a United States mint.

WILLIS. I can get along with a dollar and a half. That's not much.

JOHN. And a dollar'n half for me—that's only three dollars. You'll let us have it, won't you Pop?

ELVA. Of course he will. It's all dreadfully necessary or we wouldn't ask for it. You'll be glad, after Christmas that you let us have it, daddy.

MRS. EDWARDS. Yes, Henry, you will. I'll promise you that.

MR. E. This is highway robbery. A man isn't safe in his own home at Christmas time. (*Rises.*) This is the last you'll get. (*Takes out pocketbook and gives* MRS. E. *a bill.*) Here, divide this among you and don't ask for any more. (*Goes off.*)

WILLIS. Now, moms, don't you snitch on me. I've got to have that dollar and a half.

ELVA. Let's meet here after father goes and count up our money.

JOHN. Yes, we want to know just how we're coming.

MRS. EDWARDS. I'll call you together when the coast is clear. (*Exit.*)

PEGGY. I'll show you boys something I bought yesterday —if you'll promise not to tell.

WILLIS. John and I never tell secrets. We're as safe as the United States bank. (PEGGY *and boys exeunt.*)

ELVA. What shall I do first? There's so much to finish up I don't know where to start. Think I'll work on Grandma's apron. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter* MR. EDWARDS, *wearing overcoat and carrying hat.*)

MR. E. I think I better be getting to the office. One good thing, our business has a rest at Christmas time while the rush is on. (*Starts to draw on gloves.*) I suppose the folks are all getting ready to go out and fool away the money I handed over. All they care about me at Christmas is to get all the cash I've got. A pair of socks and a handkerchief or two will be all I get out of it.

WILLIS (*loudly, off stage*). Come on, folks. What we do to Dad will be plenty.

MR. E. (*surprised*). That sounds suspicious. I'll just listen and find out what is up. (*Slips quickly off at side from which he entered.*)

(*Enter* MRS. E., WILLIS, JOHN *and* PEGGY *from opposite side to* MR. E.'S *exit.*)

MRS. EDWARDS. Has daddy gone?

JOHN. Yes, he's gone before this. (*They all sit.*)

(*Enter* ELVA, *same side as others.*)

ELVA. Now let's count up our money. I do hope we have enough. I'll put down the amounts and add them. (*Sits at table with paper and pencil.*)

PEGGY (*happily*). I have fifty cents I earned running errands. I'm going to give it all. (ELVA *writes down fifty cents.*)

WILLIS. I've got two dollars of what I've earned that I've been saving for this, and the dollar and a half Pops gave me this morning, so that makes three-fifty. Pretty good for me, eh?

JOHN. That's only a dollar more'n I've got, and you're older, so I guess two-fifty's good for me.

ELVA. Sure it is. Six dollars from you boys is fine. I have a whole five dollar bill that goes into the fund, so that brings us up to eleven-fifty. How's that, mommie?

MRS. EDWARDS. It is splendid. I have fifteen dollars saved just for this present, and as the chair only costs us twenty-six dollars we'll have fifty cents left to buy something else.

PEGGY. A handkerchief. He'll feel bad if he doesn't get one 'cause he said his are wearing out.

MRS. EDWARDS. The chair is very nice looking and will be just the thing to rest in because it has the rest for the feet.

WILLIS. Sure, when Pops stretches out in that chair at night, with his feet on that rest, he'll think we gave him the best Christmas present in town.

ELVA. Well, he deserves a good one. He's a pretty good daddy.

JOHN. I'll say he is; we wouldn't trade him for anybody else, would we?

MRS. EDWARDS. Indeed we wouldn't. Now I'm going to get ready for town. I'll pay for the chair and have it delivered.

PEGGY. Daddy will be dreadful s'prised on Christmas morning.

JOHN. We'll have a lot of fun watching him. (MRS. E. *leads off, the others follow.*)

(*Enter* MR. EDWARDS.)

MR. E. Well, well. So that's their plan. Trying to get money from me to give me that chair I have been wanting for a year. Well, bless their hearts. I'm certainly glad I gave them that money. To think of my family wanting to

spend so much money on me. And what nice things they said about me. I didn't know they *did* think so much of me. It takes Christmas to show us a few things. It's a wonderful day. Now I must get away without their knowing I was here. (*Goes off same side he came on.*)

CURTAIN

GRANDMA'S OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS

CHARACTERS

GRANDMA MEEK, *elderly but modern and spry.*
CHET, *her grandson, a freshman in college.*
DANIEL, *her son, modern business man.*
SUSAN, *his wife.*
JULIA, *the maid.*
HUBBS, *the butler.*
BILLINGS, *an amateur hold-up man.*
JASON, *a long absent son.*

SCENE. *The* DANIEL MEEK *living room, modern and well furnished.* GRANDMA *is discovered in modern costume, sitting;* CHET *standing near.*

CHET. Well, Grandmother, I dropped in to say I'm leaving in a few minutes. I want to wish you a Merry Christmas. I'm going to spend the holidays with a college friend. He asked me because, well, I'm pretty sweet on a cousin of his who lives in the same town. Say, Grandmom, she's sure a winner. Why, she'd make Cleopatra blush, she's so much better looking than the old queen. She's modern, too. Knows her stuff, I'll say. A fellow has to be right up-to-the-minute to hold her attention. She's positively charming and I don't mean maybe. I wish you could see her.

GRANDMA. It would be a pleasure, I'm sure.

CHET. Honestly, she's wonderful. I just look at her and marvel that she *could* be so perfect. You needn't smile. You'll meet her some day—I'm going to have her down for a visit soon. Well, I'll have to go. So long and a Merry

Christmas. (*Gives her a hasty kiss on cheek and hurries off.*)

GRANDMA. Hum-m-m-m, I wonder how long it will take him to find out that she *isn't* perfect. These silly young college men certainly are tiresome.

(*Enter* MR. MEEK.)

MR. MEEK. We're about ready to start. Are you sure you'll be all right until we get back? I think the butler and the maid will look after you quite capably. Are you sure you won't be lonely or afraid?

GRANDMA (*with spirit*). See here, Dan, I homesteaded in Illinois in the days of Indians and distant neighbors. I think I can look out for myself.

MR. MEEK. You should have gone with us. The Carrington's have a most beautiful home, keep seven servants, have five cars, and—

GRANDMA. How ultra-tiresome!

MR. MEEK. We're all going to motor up to the hunting lodge for a Christmas party. It will be fine.

GRANDMA (*scornfully*). Yes, and about as Christmasy as a jazz dance.

(*Enter* MRS. MEEK.)

MRS. MEEK. I came in to tell you we're all ready. I'm sure I don't see what you intend to do here by yourself, mother. It is ridiculous to leave you alone in the house.

MR. MEEK. The maid and Hubbs will be here to look after her.

MRS. MEEK. We're going to have a splendid Christmas —so modern. None of the old-fashioned customs. We'll have Christmas dinner at a marvelous hotel—tables engaged weeks ahead. I'm perfectly thrilled over it all.

MR. MEEK. You won't be so thrilled if we miss the limited. We must get our things on.

MRS. MEEK. Well, don't stand talking. (*They kiss* GRANDMOTHER, *wish her Merry Christmas and exit.*)

GRANDMA. They needn't worry about me; I intend to have a real Merry Christmas. Daniel and Susan would be horrified if they knew what I've planned. (*Laughs.*) What they don't know won't worry them.

(*Enter* JULIA.)

JULIA. Is there anything I can do for you this evening, madam?

GRANDMA. I think not, Julia. Have Mr. and Mrs. Meek left?

JULIA. Just this minute. How fine it is to go for a Christmas visit. Some folks *do* have good times. (*Sighs.*)

GRANDMA. Why don't you go for a visit to some of your folks?

JULIA (*gloomily*). I wanted to but Mrs. Meek wouldn't let me off. I'm to stay here with you.

GRANDMA. There are night trains going every direction. You pack your suitcase and start tonight. I'm going to have some one else here with me.

JULIA. You—you don't mean it, do you?

GRANDMA. I do. I prefer to have you go. Don't argue—go get ready, but don't mention that you are going. I don't want any trouble.

JULIA. How can I thank you. I'm just sick to see the folks at home. Will Mrs. Meek object?

GRANDMA. I'm running this. Go, unless you want to miss your train.

JULIA (*happily*). A million thanks and a Merry Christmas. (*Quick exit.*)

GRANDMA. There, that's the first thing accomplished. Now to get rid of that prim butler. (*Rings.*)

(*Enter* HUBBS.)

HUBBS (*head up, very dignified tone*). You wished something, madam?

GRANDMA. I understand, Hubbs, that you're a married man.

HUBBS (*slight bow*). Very true, madam.

GRANDMA. Well, I just want to say that I think you ought to be ashamed of yourself—thoroughly ashamed, not to spend Christmas with your family.

HUBBS (*unbending somewhat*). I surely wanted to go, Madam, but what can a man do when he can't get off? The extra money Mr. Meek gave me for staying here over Christmas doesn't make up for not having Christmas with my folks, indeed not, ma'am.

GRANDMA. So that's it? Well, Hubbs, I have made other arrangements. I am going to have some one else here with me—several in fact. I want you to get ready and leave for home on the next train. There's one in a very short time.

HUBBS. But—but Mr. Meek, ma'am. He'll—

GRANDMA. I'm managing this. I want you to go. Go now, and don't miss the train. But don't tell any one. I don't want Julia to know.

HUBBS (*excited*). Yes, ma'am; all right, ma'am. A Merry Christmas, ma'am. (*He rushes off.*)

GRANDMA. And that's that! When I get rid of those two I can do as I please. (*She sits smilingly musing for a moment, then rises.*) I know what I shall do next, and I'm glad to do it, too. (*Laughs and goes off.*)

(*Enter* JULIA, *coat and hat, carrying suitcase.*)

JULIA (*looking about*). I was going to tell Grandmother Meek that I am leaving but I suppose it doesn't matter. I'll just go along to be sure I don't miss my train. I made a quick get-ready, but I think I have all I need and if I haven't I can borrow from my sister. No one knows how glad I am to be going. It's sure dreadful to be away from home at Christmas. I hope it will be all right with the Meeks because I go. (*Exit. There is a pause before* HUBBS *comes on.*)

(*Enter* HUBBS. *wearing overcoat, carrying hat and suit-case.*)

HUBBS (*looking about*). I wonder now, where is Madam? I want to tell her I'm ready to leave. I do hope now that it will be all right for me to go. I feel like Mr. Meek wouldn't allow it, and 'specially after he's paid me to stay here; but what can I do, now, with Madam ordering me to go? Nobody knows how grand it will be to sit down to-morrow for Christmas in the bosom of my own family. It just takes the heart of me to be away from them. I sure can scarcely wait till I get there to see how glad they'll be. (*Anxiously.*) I *do* hope things will be all right here, but anyhow, I'm—gone. (*Rushes off.*)

(*Enter* GRANDMA *wearing old-fashioned dress with tight waist and full skirt, a white collar and an old black lace cap with purple ribbons such as grandmas used to wear.*)

GRANDMA (*happily*). Now I feel as if I might be going to have a real Christmas. I look like a nice, old-fashioned grandmother and I'm going to act like one. I shall have our wash-woman and her three children here to spend the day with me tomorrow. Susan ordered a turkey when I decided to stay here, and it's all ready for the oven. I'll fill those children full for once. I have a lot of toys ready and everything we'll need. I'm going to sit up half the night and dress a doll that I didn't have time to do before. I shall have the best Christmas I've had for years. (*Sits.*) How nice it is to do as I please. I wonder if I ought to be afraid with Hubbs and Julia gone. Well, anyway I'm not. I think I'll be ready though. (*Goes off and returns with a long, old-fashioned revolver.*) This will protect me. I used to be a good shot in frontier days, when I was a girl. I must get at that doll. I would only—I—feel sort of lazy. (*Yawns.*) How long it seems since I was in my own home at Christmas time, fixing presents for my boys and girls. (*Sighs, leans head back and closes eyes.*) W-what was that? (*Sits up with a start.*) Some one is in the house. (*Jumps up and crouches behind high-backed easy chair she was in, revolver in hand.*)

(*Enter* BILLINGS, *cap pulled low over eyes, collar turned up, dark handkerchief over lower part of face. He carries a sack in one hand, a pistol in the other. He stands looking about and as he does so lowers hand with gun, thinking he's alone.*)

GRANDMA (*suddenly popping up as he looks in other direction, and covering him with gun*). Don't you move a muscle. I've got you covered and I can kill you so quick you wouldn't realize what had happened. (*Cheerfully.*) You ought to have seen me kill squirrels with this. I could drop them every time when they were a lot further off than you are.

BILLINGS. I—I—believe you, ma'am. (*Acts very upset.*)

GRANDMA (*crossly*). What do you mean, coming in here and scaring me? You ought to be ashamed. (*Threatens him with gun.*)

BILLINGS (*nervously*). I—I'm not scaring you; you're scaring me.

GRANDMA (*sternly*). You take off that handkerchief from your face, and take off your cap or I'll shoot a hole right through the top of it. Do as I say and sit down. (*He sits and takes them off, eyeing her in a frightened manner.*)

BILLINGS. I don't mean any harm, honest, ma'am, I don't. Let me go home peaceable, please.

GRANDMA (*sitting but keeping him covered*). Now, tell me why you're breaking into houses on Christmas eve.

BILLINGS. I'm not used to this, ma'am, honest I ain't. I've been honest, but lately since I got hurt an' lost my job ev'rything goes wrong. I guess you don't know what it is to be a man with a family an'—

GRANDMA. No, I've never been any kind of a man but I like them honest.

BILLINGS. This is Christmas eve an' I didn't have a dollar to buy sweets an' presents for the children, an' I guess you'd feel sorry for us if you saw how little there is in the house for Christmas dinner. W'y, I could 'a'cried when I

saw your mince pies an' that big turkey ready to roast, an' that frosted cake. I set one of the pies out to take home with me an' some more stuff. I was in here lookin' for some presents for the kids.

GRANDMA. I had an idea you weren't a real criminal. Of course you shouldn't steal, but this is Christmas eve and I believe in peace and goodwill, so I'm not going to make you any trouble. I'm going to send you home with a basket for your family.

BILLINGS. I sure do thank you, ma'am. I can't tell you how much I'm glad I met you, for you make me think of my grandmother as she was when I was a boy. Don't see many like you now, ma'am.

GRANDMA. Not dressed like this, I'll admit. You go to the pantry, since you've already explored it, and get what you need. Put the things in the basket that's on the kitchen table and bring it here. I'll get some presents.

BILLINGS (*rising*). I'll do that. I'll do most anything for my family—that's why I'm in here tonight. (*Goes off, left.* GRANDMA, *carrying gun, hurries off at right and returns soon with some packages. He comes back carrying a basket.*)

GRANDMA. These are some toys I had in the house. Let's put them in the basket.

BILLINGS. I took a mince pie, an' some of those nice rolls, an' some frosted cookies. The children will like 'em. Oh, ma'am, heaven bless you for this. (*She puts packages in his basket.*) We'll have a grand time tomorrow. I can't thank you, I sure can't. I'll bring the basket back.

GRANDMA (*taking bill from bag on table*). This is a present for you. Perhaps when my son has time he can help you find work.

BILLINGS. I'll do anything—jes' anything to be an honest man. I'm goin' now. I'm so anxious to show these to Nancy. (GRANDMA *shakes hands and wishes him a Merry Christmas. He goes off happily.*)

GRANDMA (*sinking into chair*). I'm simply undone. I *was* scared. What if he had been a hardened criminal? He

might have killed me. Oh, well, it's over and I'm safe. Poor man, I'm sorry for him. How glad I am I could help him. (*She slips gun into chair beside her.*) I hope I'll not need this again tonight. (*She leans back, resting; sits up suddenly and listens.*) There's some one else in the house —coming in here. (*She gets back of chair with gun, as before.*)

(*Enter* JASON MEEK, *hat pulled over eyes, collar up. He stands looking about the room. When he is looking the other way* GRANDMOTHER *rises quickly.*)

GRANDMA (*covering him with gun*). Not a move—stand right where you are or I'll shoot. I've a good notion to do so anyway. (*He starts violently and stands staring at her.*) I suppose you're another unfortunate, wanting to pick up something for your family. How disgusting—you great lummox, breaking into a home on Christmas eve. I believe I *will* shoot you. (*She glares at him, keeping him covered; he stares back at her in surprise.*) Well, why don't you say something?

JASON. The first thing I want to say is, why are you wearing that outlandish dress? Can't you afford something modern? To think of coming back and finding you—

GRANDMA (*dropping revolver to floor with a scream*). Why, why—are you Jason? (*Hurries over to him.*) Oh, Jason, I'm so glad. (*Kisses him.*)

JASON. Mother, why are you dressed like this? I verily believe this is Grandmother Wilkins' old lace cap you have on. Don't you know women are not wearing them nowadays? What ails Susan that she lets you dress this way? (*He takes off overcoat and hat. They sit.*)

GRANDMA. Oh, Jason, I haven't seen you for six years. How glad I am you came.

JASON. I intended to surprise you. I let myself in with my same old latchkey, and find you looking like a picture in an old magazine. You ought to keep up with the times.

GRANDMA (*laughing*). Don't worry. I have some modern clothes, but I wanted, on Christmas eve to be a nice, old-

fashioned grandmother. The man who was in here just before you liked me this way. I want to dress this way tomorrow to please the children I'm entertaining.

JASON. But why that old revolver? Are you alone in the house? The idea of the folks leaving you alone. Would this old thing shoot? (*Picks it up.*)

GRANDMA (*laughing*). Well, I suppose not, seeing it isn't loaded. Anyway it looks dangerous. I'm sorry I took you for a robber.

JASON. It's all right, mother dearest, and I'll not mind the out-of-date clothes if I can just be here with you for Christmas. I'll go look after my bags. (*Exit, left.*)

(*Enter* CHET, *from right.*)

CHET. Hello, Grandmom, I'm back. (*Drops into chair dejectedly.*) I let myself in with my latchkey but I can't find Hubbs. Where's the gazaboo gone?

GRANDMA. Did you miss your train?

CHET. Of course not. I don't miss trains. But, well, you know that young woman I mentioned—the one I expected to see while I was away? I certainly don't think much of her—she's punk. I tell you, Grandmom, she's no good. I called up this fellow from the station, to tell him I was leaving, and he told me that girl had gone off with some guy for a wild Christmas party somewhere? What do you think of that? My Christmas is ruined. Say, what you fixed up this way for? Are you a nice Grandma from an old-fashioned movie? My gee, you're a frump. What's that thing on your head?

GRANDMA. Just think, your Uncle Jason just got here for Christmas. You and he and I will have a fine time. We're going to entertain a poor family and give them a merry Christmas. I'm to be the old-fashioned Grandma and you shall be Santa Claus. Will you?

CHET (*bracing up*). That sounds interesting. I'll help if Uncle will. Let's go find him. (*They exeunt, he with arm about her.*)

CURTAIN

EVERYBODY SATISFIED

CHARACTERS

DUDLEY CRANE, *a bachelor no longer young.*

NATE BROCK, ED LOGAN } *cronies of about his age, also without wives.*

CLARA HALL, VIOLA PERRY } CRANES *widowed sisters*

ROSE MILLER, CRANE'S *housekeeper.*

ACT I

SCENE. *The living room in* CRANE'S *home.*

CRANE, BROCK *and* LOGAN *are discovered sitting about in lazy attitudes.*

CRANE. So, you see it's this way: I've had to spend Christmas every year for longer than I care to count up, with either sister Clara, at Bogville, or with sister Viola at Turnip Center, taking turn about. They are nice sisters, fine women, of course, since they belong to my family tree, but —well, you know how it is. A man likes a little Christmas freedom once in a blue moon or so.

BROCK. Certainly. I can appreciate your attitude in the matter with only half an eye. One tires of being always supervised.

LOGAN. What I would suggest, Dudley, is that you break away from them entirely for a change. Do as you please for this year.

CRANE. Just my idea, Ed. Why not the three of us have a regular man's Christmas here at my house and enjoy the day from start to finish, finishing when we feel good and ready to quit? My housekeeper can get up a real epicurean feast for us.

BROCK. Good! Fine! Suits me to a dot.

LOGAN. The plan looks as tempting to me as a twenty-dollar bill to a hungry tramp. We can be merry without trying.

CRANE. I'll have to hatch up a good excuse to send my sisters. What reason can I give for not joining them?

BROCK. Why—er, why not say you have a touch of the gout?

LOGAN. Or that you have a slight attack of pneumonia?

CRANE. Heck, no! They'd both come right on here to look after me and see that I was properly dosed and doped. You know how women are. It's my idea that more than one man has died off to get rid of being fussed over by a motherly woman.

BROCK. I guess you're right, Dud. Well, why not tell them you have a most important business deal on and can't possibly get away?

LOGAN. Now we're talking! That's just the plan.

CRANE. Yes, I'll write them that. I'll tell them I may have to eat a hurried lunch down town Christmas day because of being so rushed.

BROCK. This is going to be splendid. We'll come early and stay late, eh, Ed? Wear our old clothes if we want to; don't have to wash our ears unless we feel like it, eh?

LOGAN. That's the idea. I'm all pepped up over it; don't know when a Christmas has looked so inviting to me.

CRANE. And if any one says, "Now, don't eat *too much* of that, dear; we don't want you to be sick," he's going to get kicked out on the spot.

LOGAN. I won't be the one who's kicked—eat yourself into your coffin for all I care, Dud, only—you know what I mean. Don't want to have to buy flowers for you yet awhile.

BROCK (*rising*). We'll call it settled. If we're going over to see Abe Jenkins, we've got to trail along.

LOGAN (*as he and* CRANE *rise*). Yes, we must start.

CURTAIN

ACT II

Scene as above. Enter ROSE MILLER, *followed by* MRS. HALL *and* MRS. PERRY, *traveling attire, each carrying suitcase, bag and packages.*

ROSE. No, Mr. Crane isn't here just now. I imagine he'll be home soon. Will you take off your things here?

MRS. HALL. No, we'll go up to our room in just a minute. We know which one—the same we always have, I suppose.

ROSE. Yes, I think so. Mr. Crane will be dreadfully surprised to see you. If you'll excuse me, I'll look after my baking. I don't want to burn the coffee cake I'm making for breakfast.

MRS. PERRY. Coffee cake? How good that sounds. Don't let us detain you. We'll look after ourselves nicely. (ROSE *goes off, left.*)

MRS. HALL (*as she and* MRS. P. *sit*). I'm tired and hungry. We'll go brush up then we'll have something to eat. Certainly doesn't look a bit Christmasy here.

MRS. PERRY. I'll say not. Poor brother, it's a good thing we came on to cheer him up. I suppose he's just working so hard he hasn't had time to think of Christmas.

MRS. HALL. If he isn't going to be able to get home for a Christmas dinner—and think how desolate he'd be alone in this house, with not a sister near to make it pleasant for him. If he can't get home, we'll meet him down town and have dinner together. We can have a real cheerful time—though of course it isn't *my* idea of a merry Christmas.

MRS PERRY. Certainly not, but we'll be jolly for brother's sake. How very glad he'll be to see us. Let's go brush up so we'll be ready to greet him when he comes in. (*They go off at right with suitcase, etc.*)

(*After a slight pause* CRANE, BROCK *and* LOGAN *enter at left, carrying packages, evergreen, holly, etc.*)

CRANE. This is jolly in you two to come help trim up a bit. We want the place to have a Yuletide atmosphere I suppose.

BROCK. Yes, a little touch of greens to let us know it's Christmas.

LOGAN. How's the dinner coming, Dud? Going to be eatable? (*They throw packages, etc., about on chairs and table.*)

CRANE. Eatable? Say, man, you'll think you're back a few centuries at a Babylonian banquet. My housekeeper is doing herself proud I'm telling you. I shall instruct her to put everything on the table, then just leave us to ourselves. We won't be bothered by so much as a sight of a woman. (*They take off coats and throw down, getting ready to work.*)

LOGAN. Ideal! That's my vision of a perfect Christmas. Now let's get this stuff put up. (NATE *gets up on a chair with some evergreen;* ED *puts up some holly.* DUDLEY *undoes a wreath of green.*)

CRANE. Where'll we put this wreath? (NATE *sits on back of chair, his feet on the cushion, meditating.*)

BROCK. I should say to hang it in the window, or over that picture, or—well, it doesn't matter where, so it's hung. (*Sings in loud, unmusical tone, "Hang up the Christmas greens, tra, la, la, la la."*)

(*Enter* MRS. HALL *and* MRS. PERRY.)

MRS. HALL. Oh, you dear, sweet brother.

MRS. PERRY. We're *so* glad to see you again, precious. (*They make a rush for him, hug and kiss him.*)

CRANE (*amazed*). Well, I'll be—I'll be—be—jiggered! Where—where'd you come from?

MRS. HALL (*gaily*). Oh, we're just little fairies, come to give you a merry Christmas.

MRS. PERRY. And your friends—how nice in them to come in and trim up in our honor. We've met Mr. Brock and Mr. Logan, haven't we, Clara?

MRS. HALL. Oh, yes, several times when we've been here to see brother. (*They shake hands effusively with* BROCK *and* LOGAN.)

MRS. PERRY. We just couldn't think of our dear brother spending his Christmas alone, so we came on to make things pleasant for him. We'll have dinner down town—a lot of folks do, and it won't be so bad. You men should join our party if you have no other engagement.

MRS. HALL. Yes, indeed. I can't bear to think of a man spending a stupid, lonely Christmas, with no women to grace the scene.

CRANE. Well, I—I—you see, I have planned—(*looks helplessly at the other two men*).

BROCK. You see, he planned—that is, he found that he wasn't so busy—you see, he got through that business sooner than he expected, and he's going to have a little dinner here at home tomorrow.

MRS. PERRY. Oh, goody! And we'll be here for it. Won't that be too jolly for anything? I hope you and Mr. Brock are coming, Mr. Logan.

LOGAN. I—I rather expected to.

MRS. HALL. Oh, we'll love to have them, won't we, Viola? We'll see that you get plenty to eat, only of course we don't want you to make yourselves sick. We have to keep an eye on brother each Christmas so he won't over eat.

BROCK (*gallantly*). We men usually need the ladies to keep an eye on us.

MRS. PERRY. Speaking of something to eat, I'm hungry right now. Sister and I didn't have a chance to eat on the way down. Let's see if there is something in brother's larder. Are you hungry, too, Mr. Logan?

CRANE. Of course he isn't; he just ate awhile ago.

LOGAN. I am, too, hungry. Let's raid the pantry, Mrs. Perry.

MRS. PERRY (*sweetly*). Do excuse us, brother. Come on, folks. (*She and* LOGAN *go off, left, followed by* MRS. HALL *and* BROCK.)

CRANE (*sitting down angrily*). Of all their cheek; of all the presumption, of all the highway outrages! Those two women coming here uninvited and taking my friends out from under my very nose. And those two bums, the turncoat pikers, falling for it. They don't give me a thought. I'm a notion to tell them they can't eat here tomorrow. They won't do a thing but talk to Clara and Viola, the fat pigheads. A nice Christmas I'll have.

(*Enter* ROSE MILLER.)

ROSE. Why didn't you tell me, Mr. Crane, that your sisters were coming to spend Christmas. I don't know why I should have this extra work piled on me. They and those men are out there eating what I have ready for tomorrow. It makes me tired.

CRANE. Say, it makes me not only tired but angry. I didn't know they were coming. I thought I was going to have a chance to do as I pleased.

ROSE (*sitting gloomily*). They're having a jolly time, the four of them. They don't even want me out there; said they'd do the dishes when they're through eating. The men are going to wipe them. Guess I'll go spend Christmas with Aunt Emma.

CRANE. I've a good notion to go somewhere myself. I'll bet those two grinning pelicans will fall in love with Viola and Clara—they're just mutts enough. I've a good notion to get married myself. Serve 'em right. Do you know some nice woman who has thought of getting married?

ROSE. We-e-e-ll, I—I—have *thought* of it myself. A man could do a lot worse.

CRANE (*sitting up excitedly*). I'll say he could. You're nice looking, got a good disposition, are one fine and dandy cook—what more does a man need in a wife?

ROSE (*embarrassed*). I'm not so *very* nice looking.

CRANE. Yes, you are. Now that I consider the matter, I didn't know how fond I was of you, Rose. I don't know

very much about love but, hang it all, I believe I'm in love with you.

ROSE (*sweetly*). I think that's splendid of you, Dudley. (*Rises.*) Well, if I'm going to Aunt Emma's I'll have to get my things ready.

CRANE. But you're not going. We'll run away and get married. You be my Christmas present. (*Rises.*) We won't let those smart sisters of mine know what we're going to do. We'll just leave. You go get ready.

(*Enter* MRS. H. *and* MRS. P. *with the two men.* ROSE *goes off at right as they come in at left.*)

MRS. PERRY. We have decided to go over to the cathedral to the Christmas concert. Don't you want to go, Dudley?

CRANE. I would enjoy it, I'm sure, but I have some work I just must look after. You fellows take Viola and Clara.

LOGAN. Thanks for the advice, old man. We've already decided to take them. Don't worry if we're late getting back. We may go out for supper after the entertainment.

BROCK. And we ought to hear the midnight chimes and carols. They're going to be fine.

MRS. HALL. Oh, I do want to hear them. Well, Dudley, you'll have dinner with us tomorrow anyway, so you won't mind our going.

LOGAN. Come on, Nate. We'll run home and doll up. We'll be back for you ladies in a half hour. (*They hurry off, right.*)

MRS. PERRY. Your friends are ever so nice, Dud. I hope you don't mind because we insisted on their having Christmas dinner here. It will make it pleasant for you.

CRANE. Not at all; glad you persuaded them to come.

MRS. HALL. Come, Viola, we must dress. Isn't it a good thing we brought some fancy clothes? Let's hurry. (*They rush off, right.*)

CRANE. Let them tog up. Let them galivant around with those two traitors, the owl-eyed apes; let them eat up my Christmas dinner tomorrow while they make eyes at each other. Let them spoil all my Christmas plans. I don't give a care. I'll be off getting married. I'm sure satisfied if they are; in fact, everybody is satisfied. I'm getting a splendid Christmas present and Rose is too, if I do say it myself. My crickety, if I didn't most forget. I've got to buy a ring. (*Rushes off, left.*)

CURTAIN

CHRISTMAS AT SAND FLATS

CHARACTERS

MRS. BUNDY
LAME TIM
JULIA
MAY
} *her children*

MRS. WALKER, *well-to-do.*
HARVEY RAND, *her friend.*
DOBBS, *her servant.*

POP EAGEN, *old man*
GRA'MA HAMM, *elderly*
TICK, *newsboy*
} *neighbors.*

ACT I

SCENE. *Living room in* RAND'S *apartment.*

RAND *is discovered sitting by table reading.*

RAND (*tossing book onto table*). I don't feel like reading. I think I'll go over and play checkers with Tom Wilson. This feeling of Christmas in the air, with folks seeming to have such a good time, makes me restless. It makes me wish I had some one to trim up a Christmas tree for, and to spend money on. It isn't very cheerful to be alone at Christmas time. (*There is a knock; he admits* MRS. WALKER.) Well, I'll declare. Come in Harriet. Glad to see you.

(*Enter* MRS. WALKER, *dressed for the street.*)

MRS. WALKER. I do hope I'm not disturbing you, Harvey. I have come to ask a favor. (*Sits.*)

RAND. I'm delighted to be disturbed. I was sitting here wishing I had something to do, so I'm ready to grant you a favor—even to the half of my kingdom. (*Sits.*)

MRS. WALKER. Thank you. I felt I had a happy inspiration when I decided to come here. I received a telegram from my daughter and her husband saying their business will detain them so they are unable to be home for Christmas. That leaves me alone and I decided to do something different and have a real Christmasy Christmas. You are invited to help me.

RAND. Fine! Just give your orders and I'll see you through to the finish. I shall be glad to.

MRS. WALKER. This is to be a very humble Christmas, but why should we not be so? The Babe of Bethlehem spent his first Christmas in a manger, and the Kings of the Orient visited him in a stable. Can you stand a trip to Sand Flats?

RAND (*gallantly*). To the ends of the earth with you, fair lady.

MRS. WALKER. It is a very poor section—mere shanties where poor working people live. A widow with three children, one of them a lame boy, has been working for us occasionally and I want to give her and the children a merry Christmas. It will be a wonderful treat for them.

RAND. Of course I'll help. How big a check do you want?

MRS. WALKER. The fact is, Harvey, I'm not after money—it's service I want. You're to go down there with me Christmas morning and play Santa Claus. We may stay and have dinner with them—no telling. (*Laughs.*)

RAND. Play Santa Claus? That sounds real interesting, but—am I fat enough, and jolly enough?

MRS. WALKER. We'll fix you up so you'll look quite the part. I'm going now to buy toys and various presents; I'll leave you to hunt up a Santa costume. (*Rises.*)

RAND. But you'll take this (*gets bill from pocket*) and spend it for—oh, groceries, a dress for the mother, and whatever else you wish.

MRS. WALKER (*putting it in bag*). Yes, I'll do that. There are oceans of things a poor family needs in winter. I'll see you again about our plans. (*Says goodbye and goes.*)

RAND. This will be a new experience but it promises to be interesting, especially with Harriet Walker managing it. I feel a lot more cheerful.

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE. *The kitchen in the* BUNDY *home, poorly and scantily furnished, but neat.* LAME TIM *sits in a chair; the girls are playing near him;* MRS. BUNDY *is working at the table at back.*

JULIA. This doesn't seem a bit like Christmas. We didn't get hardly any presents.

MRS. BUNDY. Now, don't talk like that. Wasn't that a nice apple that was in your stocking?

JULIA. But I didn't get a dolly with long curls.

TIM (*gaily*). Yes, an' I didn't get the automobile I wanted. Now if I jes' had a car to ride around in, seein' I'm so lame, wouldn't it be grand?

MRS. BUNDY. Would you take me ridin', Timmy dear?

TIM. I'll say I would. You'd never have to walk to work. I don't see why Santy forgot to bring me a nice auter. I've sure been good.

MRS. BUNDY. That you have, Timmy. Never a bit cross when your leg hurt you, an' always tryin' to help your ma.

MAY. Why didn't Santy bring me some pretty beads an' lots of candy?

MRS. BUNDY. You got candy in your stocking. 'Tain't good for you to eat a lot.

MAY. I wanted a pretty picture book.

TIM. Now, don't grouch. Think what a nice dinner we're goin' to have.

MRS. BUNDY. Indeed we are. I'm cookin' some good meat, plenty so's you can have second helpin's, an' this cake will be fine, I know.

JULIA. Will you frost it, mommie?

TIM. Course, a Chris'mus cake has to be frosted. It won't take much to frost a cake jes' for four of us, mommie. (*There is a knock.*)

(*In walks* GRAN'MA HAMM.)

GRAN'MA. Merry Chris'mus, folks. I thought I'd come over an' see how you's all gettin' on. Dreatful lonesome home by myself.

MRS. BUNDY. Merry Chris'mus, Gran'ma. Set down. We're real well.

GRAN'MA. My daughter's husban' wasn't feelin' very well so she wrote I'd best not come over for Chris'mus. I bet he ain't hardly sick a tall, an' that's jes' an excuse so's not to have to bother with me. I'll bet they didn't want me there for Chris'mus; like as not got a raft o' his folks there. Ain't that nice when your own daughter acts that-a-way? (*Gets out old handkerchief.*) A nice merry Chris'mus I'll have. (*Boo-hoos.*)

MRS. BUNDY. Don't, don't feel that way, Gran'ma. Don't you feel bad.

GRAN'MA. I don't want to eat my Chris'mus dinner all 'lone. I ain't got nothin' good anyway. (*Boo-hoos.*)

MRS. BUNDY. You'll jes' stay here an' eat with us. It'll be real cheerful to have you.

TIM. Sure, Gran'ma, an' I'll give you one piece of my meat.

JULIA. We're goin' to have frosted cake. You like it?

GRAN'MA (*drying eyes*). Yes, indeedy. I'll bet your ma makes good cake, too. (*There is a tap-tap outside.*)

(*In walks* POP EAGEN.)

POP. Merry Chris'mus ev'rybody. (*He walks with cane, bent over.*) I cal'lated I'd drop in an' see if you was enjoyin' yourselves. (*The others say "Merry Chris'mus."*)

MRS. BUNDY. We're glad to have you come. Take a chair. Did Santy bring you a present?

POP. Not a hair or hide o' a present. Ain't that a mean shame? I was thinkin' somebody'd at least gimme a hanky. (*Shakes head.*) Ain't nobody cares 'bout me a tall. I got a brother out in Australy but I s'pose he don't care whether I'm dead or live. (*Gets out dirty handkerchief.*) I'm jes' all alone an' nobody cares. (*Weeps.*)

TIM. I care, Pop. I'm goin' to give you a piece my candy.

MAY. I'll give you a piece, too. (*She runs, gets a little sack and gives a piece to him and to* GRAN'MA.)

POP. It's jes' turrible to have to eat Chris'mus dinner all 'lone. (*Weeps.*)

MRS. BUNDY. You shall stay an' have dinner with us. We ain't got much but I guess it'll go 'round if we stretch it.

TIM. Yes, Pop, you stay an' set beside me.

POP. Thank ye, an' I sure do take pleasure in stayin'. (*There is a knock.*)

(*In walks* TICK, *looking ragged and dirty.*)

TICK. I come over to say Merry Chris'mus. I thought mebbe you'd lemme git warm by your fire, Mis' Bundy. (*They say "Merry Chris'mus" to him.*)

MRS. BUNDY. Sure, you stay an' get warm. Ain't you got a fire at home, Tick?

TICK. Nope, the Hickses have gone off visitin' an' didn't leave no fire.

GRAN'MA. Didn't they leave you some Chris'mus dinner?

TICK. Nope, nothin' but a slice a bread an' some cold taters. She's mean, Mis' Hicks is.

POP. Mebbe Mis' Bundy'll ask you to eat here, seein' it's Chris'mus.

GRAN'MA. That's jes' what I was thinkin'.

TIM. He can have my other piece of meat, mom. I don't care 'bout any today. I guess meat ain't good fer fellers with lame legs anyhow.

MRS. BUNDY. All right, Timmy. We'll stretch things a little more an' have some for Tick. Now, I think this is goin' to be a reg'lar merry Chris'mus party.

POP. Sure 'tis, an' I wish I could a wore a clean shirt—only I didn't have no clean one.

MAY. I think you look real nice.

GRAN'MA. I think he does, too.

POP. Thanks, Gran'ma, an' the same to you. (*There is a knock.* JULIA *goes over and says, "Come in."*)

(*Enter* MRS. WALKER, *followed by* SANTA—MR. RAND.

MRS. WALKER. Merry Christmas everyone. Mrs. Bundy, Santa Claus decided to stay here in town today, so I brought him over to see you and the children.

MAY (*clapping hands*). Oh, Santy, goody, goody!

SANTA. You see, Mrs. Bundy, I got so mixed up last night, with so many homes to visit, I didn't find you folks at all. I'm surely sorry.

JULIA. Oh, I s'pose your dolls are all given 'way.

SANTA. No, they're not. I'm sure I have two left.

MRS. BUNDY (*wiping off chair*). Please sit down, Mrs. Walker. (*She sits.*)

GRAN'MA. Well, Santy, I don't care 'bout a doll but if you've any sacks of candy left I wouldn't mind havin' one. Seems like I don't ever git all the candy I want.

POP. I ain't offerin' no suggestions, Santy, but I wouldn't be the least bit mad if you'd gimme a new hanky. I sure do need one.

SANTA (*reproachfully to* MRS. WALKER). Why didn't you tell me these other people were to be here and I'd have brought something nice for them?

MRS. WALKER. Don't worry, Santa Claus. I think there'll be something for them.

SANTA. I have my servant with me, Mrs. Bundy, an Eskimo from up by the north pole. If you don't mind, I'll have him bring in a few presents.

TICK. I guess she won't mind a tall, Santy. (SANTA *goes over and brings in* DOBBS. *He wears long fur coat with bright sash tied at side and an Eskimo cap with a stuffed peak. He carries a large basket.*)

SANTA. I thought I told you to bring two baskets.

DOBBS (*grumbling*). I guess so you tink me carry two baskets all same time? I guess you tink mebbe dese ain't heavy, uh-huh. Me bring nex' one nex' time, uh-huh. (*Goes out.*)

SANTA. Don't mind him because he's cross. He's in a hurry to get back to the North Pole to see his girl.

(DOBBS *comes in with a second basket.*)

POP. My crickety, I'm gittin' all excited. Hope I don't git sick.

TICK. Won't make *me* sick, but I'm glad I'm here.

SANTA. Mrs. Walker, I think you better help me, I'm so tired from my long trip.

DOBBS (*crossly*). What-um for you tired, uh-huh? Me, I do all de work, luggin' big baskets, uh-huh. (*He sits down on floor and goes to sleep.*)

MRS. WALKER. You put food in this basket didn't **you,** Santa? (*Takes cover from smaller basket.*)

SANTA (*looking into basket*). Yes, this has cakes, cookies, rolls, meat, and mince pies. Now everyone here who doesn't like mince pie say I. (*There is a great silence; he looks about surprised.*) What! Do you mean you like them? Well, everybody who *does* like mince pie say I. (*They all yell "I" loudly.*) Fine. Now, I'll tell you, we want all of you who are here to eat Christmas dinner together, and if you don't eat a *lot* I'll never come here again.

TICK. I'll do my part, Santy. I'ze mos' starved.

POP. Feel sort o' that way myself.

SANTA. Now, this other basket has presents. There are dolls for these girls, and toys you'll like to play with, and some things you'll like to wear. Mrs. Bundy, I'm afraid you'll be cross over the present I brought you.

MRS. BUNDY. Oh, no, I think not, Santa Claus. I guess I'll like anything you brought.

SANTA. But this is a nice new dress and I'm sure you don't care to have a new dress. (MRS. B. *laughs.*)

TIM. But she wants one. She needs one real bad, Santy.

SANTA. Oh, then it's all right.

MRS. WALKER. I want to say, friends, that I knew Mrs. Bundy had some neighbors down here who might be pleased with some presents, so I told Santa Claus to put in some gifts for them. (*To* POP.) I hope that shirt will fit you that Santa brought. I think it will.

POP (*jumping up and waving cane*). Hip-hooray! I'll be tickled pink an' purple with a new shirt. I'll wear it whether it fits er not.

SANTA. I have ever so much to do yet before I start home, and it's a long way to drive, up nearly to the North Pole, you know, so I'm going to let Mrs. Bundy unpack these presents and give them out as she wishes.

MRS. WALKER. Then we want you to have a splendid Christmas dinner and all have a very merry day together.

SANTA. Wake up, you galoot. We're going. (*He pokes* DOBBS.)

DOBBS (*waking with a start*). What you keep me waitin' for, uh-huh? Me ready long time. (*Gets up and starts off.*)

MRS. BUNDY. I surely thank you, Santa and Mrs. Walker, for this grand treat. You've made us very happy.

TIM. I'll say so.

GRAN'MA. This is the splendidest Chris'mus I've had sence my husband's fun'ral.

JULIA. Thank you for ev'rything, good Santy.

MRS. WALKER. Goodbye and a happy day. (*She goes off followed by* SANTA.)

MAY. Mommie, please find my doll quick.

POP. Well, I've often hern tell that it's more blessed to give than to receive, but I'm puffectly satisfied to receive that shirt an' a big hunk o' mince pie.

THE CHILDREN (*as* MRS. BUNDY *starts to unpack presents*). Oh, hurry, hurry, hurry.

CURTAIN

THE ROWE'S CHRISTMAS GUESTS

CHARACTERS

MRS. ROWE
MYRTLE } *her daughters.*
RUTH }
MRS. BOWEN

VIRGIL, *her son.*
JOSEPH LIBBY, *elderly uncle.*
EBEN HUNT, *elderly neighbor.*

SCENE. *The* ROWE *living room, plainly furnished.*
MRS. ROWE, MYRTLE *and* RUTH *are discovered, sitting in gloomy poses.*

MRS. ROWE. I think we may as well give up the idea of any Christmas since times are so hard with us. We can omit it for one year I'm sure.

MYRTLE. We'll do no such a thing. I just love Christmas time and we're going to celebrate some way or other, hard up or not.

RUTH. Good! My sentiments exactly. Let's have some sort of a Christmas even if we have to borrow money to pay the rent when it comes due.

MRS. ROWE. I think it is wiser to forget all about the day and go on as usual. Christmas is such an expense. (*Sighs.*)

MYRTLE. Mother, I'm ashamed of you—having so little Christmas spirit. Whom shall we invite for company?

MRS. ROWE. We can't afford to have any one.

RUTH. Well, we're going to, and forget about the expense. I say, let's ask Aunt Ettie and Virgil. We haven't seen them for quite a long time and they have as hard a time to get along as we do.

MYRTLE. Yes, a worse time with Aunt Ettie sick so much. Yes, mother, we'll ask them for Christmas. It won't cost us a lot.

MRS. ROWE (*gloomily*). All right, if you two are planning this, go ahead and plan. It won't matter I suppose if we have to go without meals for a week to make up for it.

RUTH. Goodness, don't be such a bag of gloom. Now, brace up, dearie, for I have something else to tell you. We're going to have Eben Hunt here for Christmas dinner, too.

MRS. ROWE. Eben Hunt! We are not. I refuse.

RUTH. We *must* have him for I asked him two days ago. I hadn't dared tell you about it before, I knew you'd make such a fuss. I walked part way home with him and he was so blue because he had to spend Christmas alone that I

couldn't resist asking him to have dinner with us. You can't imagine how happy he was.

MYRTLE. I'm glad you asked him. We'll enjoy having him here and he will have a wonderful visit with mother. (*Laughs.*) Cheer up, dearie.

MRS. ROWE. And who, may I ask, is going to get the dinner for all this company?

RUTH (*winking at* MYRTLE). Myrtle and I will get the dinner, roast chicken, mince pie, and all.

MRS. ROWE (*horrified*). You know you two can't get a meal. I'll attend to the cooking myself.

MYRTLE. Of course you will, dearie, because we want it to be *very* good, and I'd like to see any one in town beat you when it comes to a real meal.

MRS. ROWE. Your Aunt Ettie will enjoy coming; she likes my cooking.

RUTH. Then we can consider it settled, can't we? I'll write to Auntie right now. We can show her and Virgil a merry time, I'm sure.

MRS. ROWE. Only I don't see how we'll afford it all. Eben Hunt is a dreadful eater.

MYRTLE. If we do our part, trying to make some one happy at Christmas time, I'm sure we'll manage somehow. Perhaps some one will send us a nice check for a Christmas present.

MRS. ROWE. Yes, and perhaps *not*. No such good luck.

RUTH. I have five dollars saved toward a new dress but I don't need it until spring. I'll give that five dollars toward our Merry Christmas.

MYRTLE. And I'll get along without that new hat I intended to buy, and we'll not spend much on presents for each other.

MRS. ROWE. I suppose we should have a little Christmas tree.

RUTH. Oh, I was just waiting for some one to suggest that. I *do* want a tree. We'll have it just before dinner so Mr. Hunt can be here. I can give him that new necktie I found a few weeks ago. He'll like it.

MYRTLE. We'll have a wonderful time. The best Christmas is when we're trying to make some one else have a good time. It's splendid of you to help us, momsie.

MRS. ROWE. As I mentioned before, we can't afford it, but if we're going to celebrate we'll do the best we can. We'll make a little go a long way.

MYRTLE. I'm just all pepped up. I know we'll enjoy it wonderfully and let's not worry about the expense until it's all over.

RUTH. Yes, let's imagine that we *are* going to get that check, one that will pay the bills and leave some over.

MRS. ROWE (*laughing*). Oh, you two are enough to make any one enthused over Christmas. Let's go plan the dinner.

RUTH. We'll have such good mashed potatoes that Eben Hunt will eat a lot of them and not want so much pie. Come on. (*They go off happily.*)

CURTAIN

SCENE II. *As above except that evergreens are on the wall and the room hung with red and green festoons.*

MYRTLE *and* RUTH *are standing looking about.*

MYRTLE. I think it looks ever so nice, don't you, Ruth?

RUTH. Yes, it makes me feel like Christmas. I'm glad Aunt Ettie and Virgil are here. Mother seems very glad to see them. I hope they won't want to borrow any money —our stock is getting so low. They're both somewhat given to borrowing.

MYRTLE. I'm sure they won't suggest it at Christmas, when they're here visiting. I better go see how they're getting along. (*Exit, left.*)

(*Enter* VIRGIL, *from the right.*)

VIRGIL. How glad I am to be here, Cousin Ruth. You don't know how much mother and I appreciate coming here to have a Merry Christmas with you. We were thinking we'd have a lonely time until your invitation came.

RUTH. Now that you're here we must have the best time possible. One that we'll still be remembering five years from now.

VIRGIL. Yes, indeed. By the way, I wish you'd lend me a dollar. I want to do a little shopping I'd forgotten. You won't mind, will you? You know how fast money goes at Christmas—simply slips through one's fingers and flies away.

RUTH. Yes, I have discovered that. I think I can let you have the dollar, Virgil. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have all we wanted to spend for one Christmas?

VIRGIL. Oh, boy, I'd be the town's best customer.

RUTH (*laughingly*). Well, I'd run you a close second. (*She gets bag and hands him a dollar.*)

VIRGIL. Oh, say, if you just as soon, make it fifty cents more. I have thought of something else I should buy.

RUTH (*trying to be cheerful*). Just as you say. Here 'tis. (*Gives it.*)

VIRGIL. Thanks a million. I'll sure remember you when I get rich. (*He hurries off, right.*)

RUTH. Dearie me, our fund is getting low. (*Brightens.*) Anyway, I'll not worry. (*Goes off; left.*)

(*Enter* MYRTLE *and* MRS. BOWEN, *left.*)

MRS. BOWEN. I don't know when I've felt so down-right happy as I am now, being here for Christmas. It makes me feel five years younger to see you folks again.

MYRTLE. Isn't it glorious how the Christmas spirit gets under one's skin and drives away the gloom?

MRS. BOWEN. My mouth is watering already seeing the good things your mother is preparing. She's a wonderful

cook. By the way, dearie, lend me a dollar, will you? I know you won't mind because there's something else I just *must* get, since I've found Eben Hunt is to be here. I've known him for years—such a fine man.

MYRTLE (*downcast*). Well, if we have it, Auntie. (*She finds bag, gives a dollar.*) We'll try to spare you this.

MRS. BOWEN. Thanks, darling. I'll sure pay it back some day. Now I'll run to the store. (*Hurries off.*)

MYRTLE. Bless me but our funds are getting low. Where is that other dollar and a half that was in here? (*Looks into bag gloomily.*) Wolf, get away from the door. (*Shakes fist toward door.*) I'm *not* going to worry. (*Hums a tune.*) Did some one knock? (*Listens; knock is heard.*) I hope my hair is all right. (*Goes off, right.*)

(*Re-enter* MYRTLE *followed by* JOSEPH LIBBY, *carrying suitcase.*)

MYRTLE. Come right in this way. Will you be seated?

LIBBY. What I'd like is to be seated at a table. I'm hungry as a starved zebra. I 'spose you don't know me. (*Drops into chair.*)

MYRTLE. No, I really don't.

LIBBY. Not surprising since you haven't seen me for more'n sixteen years. I'm your ma's uncle, Joseph Libby, from Australia. Been there ten, 'leven years. I came back to the states for a visit and made up my mind I'd spend a week or so with your ma. Hope you're going to have a real, old-fashioned Christmas. I'd enjoy it, Christmas tree and all.

MYRTLE. This is fine, Uncle Joseph. We're just as pleased as anything to have you here. We'll show you the merriest Christmas we can. You go out in the kitchen and give mother a surprise.

LIBBY (*getting up*). That's what I'll do. If she don't know me I'll pass off for a tramp and see if I can get a meal.

(*Laughs.*) Sure seems good to be here. (*She shows him off at left; he exits.*)

MYRTLE (*dropping into chair*). Oh, dear, dearie me! How'll we manage?

(*Enter* RUTH, *from right.*)

RUTH (*anxiously*). What is it? Have you heard bad news?

MYRTLE. Oh, Ruth, mother's Uncle Joseph Libby has just arrived from Australia. We've only got twenty-five cents left in the purse; how are we going to stand this extra expense?

RUTH. Only—twenty-five cents—where is the rest?

MYRTLE. I loaned Aunt Ettie a dollar.

RUTH (*laughing*). And I loaned Virgil a dollar and a half. Isn't Christmas merry? But what about Uncle Joseph? Does he look prosperous?

MYRTLE. Not at all. I think he's—another poor relation.

RUTH (*brightly*). I'm glad he's here. We'll have a splendid time in spite of our poverty. Cheer up—things may get worse. (*Laughs.*)

MYRTLE. We'll carry things with a high hand; 'tis Christmas—we're going to be merry. Let's go help mother. (*They go off, arm in arm, left.*)

(*Enter* MRS. BOWEN *and* EBEN HUNT, *right.*)

MRS. BOWEN. I'm surely glad to see you again, Eben. It seemed like old times to meet you on the street. Are you well? (*They sit.*)

EBEN. Well? I'll say so—don't feel over forty-five and now that I see how young you look I don't believe I'm even forty-five.

MRS. BOWEN. Do you really think I look young? Why, Eben, that's as good as a Christmas present. I met Tom Carr on the street and he couldn't see how I kept down my age so well.

EBEN. Humph, that Tom Carr—the doddering old relic is always trying to soft-soap the ladies. Steer clear of him, Ettie. Say, did you know I'm to eat Christmas dinner here tomorrow? I'm tickled to death you're here too. It takes some old friends to make a real Merry Christmas. (*Voice off stage at left calls "Aunt Ettie, come here."*)

MRS. BOWEN. Excuse me, Eben, I'll see what they want. (*Exit, left.*)

(*Enter* VIRGIL, *right.*)

EBEN. Well, well! Are you Ettie's little boy? (*Jumps up to shake hands.*)

VIRGIL (*coldly*). Of course not. I'm a young man—almost ready to graduate from high school. (*Shakes hands loftily.*)

EBEN. Well, well! I can't see how you've grown into such a fine young man so soon as this. Ettie sure ought to be proud of you. (*Beams at* VIRGIL.) Yes, sir, you're the real article. If you were my boy I'd send you to college, I sure would.

VIRGIL. Why not adopt me? Make yourself a Christmas present.

EBEN. Maybe I can figure out a way to—er—manage it.

VIRGIL. Excuse me—I've got to mail a package to—to a girl back home. I almost forgot. (*Hurries off, right.*)

EBEN. My, my, to think he's Ettie's little boy. (*Sits.*) Well, well!

(*Enter* MRS. ROWE, MRS. BOWEN *and* LIBBY.)

MRS. ROWE. Uncle Joseph, I can't say how glad I am to see you. I always did think a lot of you. Mr. Hunt, I want you to know my Uncle, Mr. Libby. (*They shake hands.*)

EBEN. Glad to know you, sir. If you're relation to Mrs. Rowe and to Ettie, here, you're all right. (*They sit.*)

MRS. BOWEN. He's only related to me by family marriage but I'm just as glad to have him here to enjoy Christmas with us.

LIBBY. This is going to be the best Christmas I've spent since I went to Australia years ago. I've been catching the Christmas spirit ever since I struck the states.

EBEN. Wonderful thing, this Christmas spirit; I'm getting all filled up with it myself.

MRS. BOWEN. If I'm to get that shopping done, I'll have to start for town. (*Rises.*)

EBEN. I'll just walk 'long with you, Ettie. (*They go off, right.*)

(*Enter* MYRTLE *and* RUTH, *left.*)

MRS. ROWE (*rising*). Girls, sit down and visit with Uncle Joseph. I want to look after those pies. Your lunch will be ready in a few minutes, Uncle Joseph. (*Exit, left.*)

LIBBY. Now, I want to talk to you girls. (*They sit.*) Are you planning to have a turkey for Christmas dinner?

MYRTLE. I—I think not, Uncle.

LIBBY. Now, I want a big roast turkey, stuffed with oysters, yes, sir. I want you girls to order one right away.

RUTH (*aside*). I wonder if we can get it charged some where. (*She and* MYRTLE *look at each other despairingly.*)

LIBBY. I want that Christmas tree just loaded up with fancy trimmings, and colored lights. I want it to be the prettiest tree I've ever laid eyes on.

MYRTLE. Yes, Uncle. (*Aside to* RUTH.) What *shall* we do?

LIBBY. And I want you to get a peck of the best candy and nuts in the town. I'm going to make myself sick on 'em, same as I used to when I was a boy. Get plenty and get the best.

MYRTLE. Yes, Uncle. (*Looks at* RUTH, *shakes head mournfully.*)

LIBBY. I want you to get some of those big Christmas wreaths—big ones. They make a room seem more Christmas-y. Big ones, now.

RUTH (*faintly*). Yes, Uncle.

LIBBY (*rising*). Put your things on and go to town right now. I want this to be a *real Christmas.* I didn't come from Australia for nothing. (*Pulls out pocketbook and takes out bill.*) Here's fifty dollars. You go spend all of it. I'm going to fill up on that lunch your ma's getting me. (*Gives bill to* MYRTLE.)

MYRTLE (*as both girls rise in amazement*). But this—this is—too much money.

LIBBY. No such a thing. I've got plenty—made lots in sheep in Australia. Get busy and spend this. (*Exit, left.*)

RUTH (*as the girls fall into each other's arms*). Oh, isn't this wonderful—*perfectly—glorious?*

MYRTLE. I never was so happy in my life. Isn't this going to be the grandest Christmas of our lives?

RUTH. Let's rush to the stores, before we wake up and find this is a dream. (*They start off, right.*)

(*Enter* MRS. BOWEN *and* EBEN.)

MRS. BOWEN. Don't rush off, girls. I—we—I—want to tell you something wonderful. I mean, you tell them, Eben.

MYRTLE. I thought you went to town.

MRS. BOWEN. Not yet. We've been talking in the hall and —you tell them, Eben.

EBEN. I'll say I'll tell them. Your Aunt Ettie and I are going to be married. I coaxed her into it and she couldn't say "No" seeing it's Christmas time and I need a present of a wife. I'm the luckiest man in town—and the proudest.

RUTH. This is splendid. (*They both kiss her.*)

EBEN. Say, you girls can't have 'em all. (*He kisses her with a proud smack.*) Come on, Ettie, let's go buy you a ring for a Christmas present. (*They go off arm in arm.*)

MYRTLE (*as girls fall into each other's arms, laughing*). Aunt Ettie and Mr. Hunt! How ridiculous.

RUTH. No, it isn't. I think they'll get along beautifully.

(*Enter* VIRGIL, *left.*)

MYRTLE. Virgil, you're going to have a new father for a Christmas present.

VIRGIL. What? Who? I've told ma she ought to get married.

RUTH. Mr. Hunt. Your mother knew him years ago.

VIRGIL. Good! Now he can send me to college. Hurrah for a Merry Christmas.

CURTAIN

PART III

DRAMATIC MATERIAL FOR CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL, OR YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRAMS

THE COMING OF THE KING

Suspend from a wire across the stage a mosquito-netting curtain, drawing it taut and securing to floor. Hang heavy curtain in front of this that parts in center, half drawing to each side and hanging as a drape at either side of the netting. Make an arch-shaped border for the netting of heavy wrapping paper, drawing on and coloring with crayolas or water-colors, a large rambling flower pattern, in shades of light gray, dull green and soft rose. Ideas for pattern can be secured from magazine advertisements, or pieces of cretonne. The effect, with a colored light back of the netting, the actors standing back of the plain space, is pleasing and artistic. The border pins to the netting, reaching to the heavy drape on each side. Hang a white sheet for background back of the netting and have t hand a dark shawl or blanket that can be hung over the white, using light background for some of the actors and dark for others.

PART I. MESSAGE OF THE PROPHETS

Curtains are drawn showing man garbed in dark robe and head dress, standing against the light background. He presents profile, face raised, one hand up.

READER (*at front, off stage*). And it came to pass in those days, in the land of Canaan, that mighty men, the prophets of the Lord, spake unto the children of Israel, foretelling the birth of Christ. Harken ye now to the words of Micah, the prophet.

MICAH (*the poser, with well-raised voice*). But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. (*Curtains are closed; the dark background is hung;* ISAIAH, *in white robe and head dress, takes place.*)

READER (*as curtains are drawn*). Then also spake Isaiah, a holy man of God, unto the people, saying:

ISAIAH. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. (*Curtains are closed.*)

PART II. THE VIRGIN MARY

SCENE I. *Curtains are drawn back showing a sweet-faced young woman in white gown with cape and head dress of blue, against the dark background. She kneels, hands in supplication at center of breast, face raised.*

READER. And the angel said unto Mary, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Thou shalt bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (*Curtains are closed.*)

SCENE II. MARY *stands, right foot slightly advanced, left hand down and out from side, right hand up, palm to the front, face raised.*

READER. And in those days Mary magnified the Lord, saying:

MARY. My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. (*Curtains are closed.*)

SCENE III. MARY *sits by a box well-filled with hay on which rests a doll wrapped for the babe.* JOSEPH *stands at the back, right hand holding a staff, his head bowed.*

READER. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

(MARY *sings softly. Tune, "All Through The Night."*)

Sleep, my babe, and peace attend thee,
All through the night;
Guardian angels God will send thee,
All through the night;
Soft the silent hours are creeping,
Angels smile upon thy sleeping,
I my loving vigil keeping,
All through the night.

(*Curtains are closed.*)

PART III—ADORATION OF SIMEON

SIMEON, *with long white hair and beard, a turban and flowing dark robe stands, profile view, his hand raised;* MARY, *holding the wrapped doll, stands facing him;* JOSEPH *stands near* MARY, *facing front.*

READER. And behold, there was in Jerusalem, a man whose name was Simeon, a just man and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then he took him up in his arms and blessed God, and said:

(SIMEON *steps forward, takes babe from* MARY, *holds it on left arm, his right hand raised.*)

SIMEON. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

READER. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

CURTAIN

VOICES FROM THE PAST

For four boys. One is costumed as the inn keeper of Bethlehem; the second, as a wise man from the east; the third, as a shepherd. The fourth boy takes the part of an adult of today. He comes in and speaks musingly.

MAN OF TODAY. Why all this keeping of Christmas, and observing customs musty with the age of centuries? Why this prating of absorbing the Christmas spirit, and living the teachings of the Christ? Nonsense! Foolishness! I shall pay no attention to it. (*Sits in easy chair.*) I shall

drop Christmas from my calendar. (*Closes eyes; feigns sleep.*)

(*Enter the* INN KEEPER.)

INN KEEPER. Alas, what remorse is mine. A keeper of the inn was I in David's city, the Bethlehem of Judea. I it was who turned from the door Joseph and Mary. "No room in the inn," said I and watched them turn wearily away. How honored my inn had the Christ-child first rested his head beneath my roof. How honored I to have housed the new-born King. (*Remorsefully.*) But I turned them from the inn and for long years I repented, being torn with remorse. No room in the inn for the Christ-child. (*Passes to other side and stands.*)

(*Enter the* SHEPHERD.)

SHEPHERD. Upon the Judean hillside watched we our flocks, the other shepherds and I, on that night of the wondrous announcement. There was a feeling of unrest, a premonition of eventful happenings. Suddenly a bright light shone about us and an angel voice told us of the Babe lying in the Bethlehem manger. Then a mighty host filled the heaven above us, singing peace on earth, good will to men. When they were gone the shepherds cried with amazement, "Come, let us go even now to Bethlehem and see if this be true as was spoken by the angel." They started eagerly but I, ah, I was tired. The night was far spent and the walk to Bethlehem was a weary one. I stayed behind, resting with the flocks, I missed that most wonderful sight, the Holy Child in the manger with Mary watching by His side. I might have taken part in the adoration of the shepherds, but (*sadly*) I stayed behind to sleep. The remaining years of my life were saddened because of it. (*Passes over and stands by the* INN KEEPER.)

(*Enter the* WISE MAN.)

THE WISE MAN. A wise man of the east was I, one who studied the stars of heaven and foretold coming events. I was one who found in the sky that strange star which beck-

oned us from the east. Seeking the message of its gleam we started on our camels across the long miles stretching before us. It was a tiresome journey and whither was it leading us? A foolish adventure perhaps with no reward for our hardships. I lost interest; I stayed behind, watching my companions move on slowly across the desert sands, then I returned home. I did not behold the Christ-child in the stable to which the star led the three who went to Bethlehem. I missed the great opportunity of my life. I (*very sadly*) was the *unwise* man who stayed in the east, ever regretting it. (*Passes over and stands.*)

MAN OF TODAY (*waking with a start*). Who has been speaking? In my dream I beheld characters of long ago, and heard them lamenting. How real they seemed. (*He is facing side of stage and the three are behind him, so he does not see them.*)

INN KEEPER. We are voices from the past. We have come to tell you of our sad mistakes that you might be wiser than were we.

SHEPHERD. There are those of today who neglect the coming of the Christ, even as did we of old. To such ones we bring our message this Christmas.

THE WISE MAN. The spirit of Christ is abroad at Christmas time, seeking to enter the hearts of men; bringing the Christ-child to them in His teachings and in the love and sympathy of the Yuletide. Foolish and unfortunate are they who neglect the joys of Christmas and fail to join in keeping the birthday of the Bethlehem Babe. To you, oh, man of today, we bring these warnings. (*The three pass off at the side near which they stand without being seen by the* MAN OF TODAY.)

MAN OF TODAY. Am I growing cold of heart? (*Rises.*) Am I missing the joys of Christmas by my indifference? I needed the warning brought by these voices from the past; I shall heed their words. I am going now to develop some Christmas spirit. (*Exit.*)

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

If screens are not at hand use curtains, having one at left of stage to conceal the shepherds, one at the back to screen the singers, and one at the right for the inn keeper. Still farther to the right and nearer the front of stage have another screen or curtain back of which is placed the manger with a babe and low seat by it for Mary. All taking part are in costume, these being easy to copy from Bible pictures.

The reader stands at front, off stage.

READER. And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every man unto his own city. Then went Joseph up from Nazareth into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, being of the lineage of David; to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife. But coming unto Bethlehem, it was found that there was for them no room in the inn.

(JOSEPH *and* MARY *come on during the reading and pass slowly up the left, in front of the curtain hiding shepherds, across to the right. When the reader stops* JOSEPH *raps with the staff he carries at what is supposed to be the inn door. The* INN KEEPER *comes out, shakes head, motions* JOSEPH *and* MARY *away. They start on wearily, coming up and across to the extreme right, in front of curtain, then pass back of the curtain that conceals manger. As they start from the inn the voices behind curtain at the back, sing.*)

CHORUS, (*Tune, "Softly Now The Light of Day"*).

In the inn no room today,
Wearily they turn away;
In the inn no room there be,
Naught but stable left for thee.

In the inn no room today,
Seek thy rest upon the hay;
Sleeping with the cattle there,
Joseph and young Mary fair.

(*The curtain is drawn, revealing several shepherds lying on the floor.*)

READER. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

(*The shepherds jump to their feet, then bow in fear with their faces to the floor, during the singing.*)

CHORUS, (*Tune, "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear"*):

"Fear not," the angel to them spake,
"For joy I bring to thee;
This message of good will and peace,
To all mankind shall be.
To you is born in Bethlehem
The Saviour of mankind,
And lying in a manger there,
The baby thou shalt find."

(*As the singing ceases the shepherds rise and look at one another in amazement.*)

READER. Then said the shepherds one to another, "Let us go now even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

(*They motion and point off to right, then pass across to the right. The curtain is drawn, revealing* MARY *by the manger and* JOSEPH *standing back of her.*)

READER. And they came with haste and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

(*The shepherds stand in a group at one side, gazing reverently at the manger during the singing.*)

CHORUS (*Tune, As above*):

In stable lowly lay the babe,
The Saviour sweet and fair,
Naught but a manger for a bed,
No costly robe to wear;
And there the shepherds of the plain,
Their adoration bring,
And know not that the world has found
Its Saviour and its King.

(*The shepherds pass from stage. The wise men, each bearing gifts, come on and stand at the left.*)

READER. Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him. And, lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh.

(*During the reading the wise men move slowly across to the right, then kneel before the manger, bow in attitude of worship, then present gifts.*)

CHORUS, (*Tune, "O, Little Town of Bethlehem"*):

O little Babe of Bethlehem,
Honored of kings art thou;
Before thy lowly manger throne
The wise men humbly bow,
There in their hearts in silence
The great glad tidings swell,
That He is come from Heaven to earth,
The Lord Emanuel.

(*The wise men rise, stand a moment reverently by the manger, then pass from scene.*)

READER. When the wise men were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph, saying, Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there till I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him.

(JOSEPH *looks up, startled, then with face upturned seems to listen. He touches* MARY *on the arm; she picks up babe and they pass off.*)

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

As the melody is played through once the children come onto stage, half from the right and half from the left, entering at the corners of back, those from the left passing across the back of stage, down the right side, across the front, up the left side and halting across the back of stage. Those from the right side cross the back, keeping next to the back as the lines pass; go down left side, across the front, keeping to inside as lines pass; up the right side and halt across back, behind the other line. Time the marching so lines are in position at back just before the close of the music.

As the melody begins the second time all march up stage to the front, singing:

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.

As they halt near front of stage those on front line spread apart so those on the back row can step into line with them, alternating, one from first row, then one from second, and standing in slightly bowed line. They all raise right hand and hold as if shading eyes, bending body somewhat forward and sing:

Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels.

Put hands together at center of breast, in attitude of prayer and sing:

O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

All slightly face right, raise right hand high, pointing upward, faces raised, looking upward, and sing:

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,

Face front, raise both hands, looking upward, while singing:

Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God in the highest glory.

Assume attitude as above for the remaining lines. Melody is repeated for marching from stage, half going to each side.

SCENES FROM LONG AGO

At front of stage, slightly toward the right corner have the curb of a well, arranged from good-sized stones. Back of the center have a netting curtain, as described in "The Coming of The King." The girls speak in front of this curtain, near the well; the scenes are shown back of the curtain.

CHARACTERS

ZELMA, TAMAR, ESTHER, REBEKAH, *young Jewish women, in belted robes, sandals, and head dress. Each carries a tall pitcher for carrying water from the well.*

(*Enter* ZELMA *and* REBEKAH, *talking as they come on.*)

ZELMA. Glad I am to have met you, Rebekah. 'Tis some time since we have visited together. Let us not hurry. There is much I would say to thee. (*They set down pitchers and stand by the well.*)

REBEKAH. I have wanted to see you, Zelma. Tell me of thy visit to Jerusalem.

(*Enter* TAMAR *and* ESTHER.)

TAMAR. Peace be unto thee, Rebekah and thou, Zelma. Esther and I hastened when we saw you here, that we might speak together as becometh friends.

ESTHER. Tell me, hast thou been to see the Babe of Bethlehem? Is it not wonderful that our little town has thus fulfilled the words of the prophet of old?

REBEKAH. I have seen him, Esther, and the sweet-faced mother Mary. How I wish I might have seen the angel who announced his birth to the shepherds.

ZELMA. Would that I could have heard the heavenly host singing above the hill their praises to God.

TAMAR. Is it true, think thou, as it is whispered in Jerusalem, that he is born king of the Jews?

ESTHER. It may be. Is it not written by the prophets that of the line of David shalt come forth a ruler?

ZELMA. Yes, and often in mind I picture the annointing of the lad David, by the prophet Samuel, as told us by our elders. (*The curtains are drawn from the netting revealing a young man, fair and of ruddy face, clad as a shepherd lad, being anointed by one dressed as an elderly prophet. Several persons stand at the background, wearing robes and head dress.*)

REBEKAH. Seem I now to hear the words of the Lord, as often repeated to us: Fill thine horn with oil, and go. I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

TAMAR. And now cometh a new king to the throne of David. (*Curtains are closed.*)

ESTHER. I am thinking, too, of the story so often told us of Ruth the Moabitess, who gleaned in the fields of Boaz, near this very town, our Bethlehem. Hers is a most beautiful story.

ZELMA. Little thought she when she said unto Naomi: Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God, that her grandson Jesse should become the father of king David.

(*The curtains are drawn, showing* RUTH *gleaning, with* BOAZ *standing in the background. She gleans back and forth, then he comes forward, holding up his hand in salute. She clasps her hands and stands before him humbly.*)

REBEKAH. And little did she think, as she gleaned in the fields to supply the needs of her mother-in-law, Naomi, that Boaz would look upon her with favor. Of her lineage is born this child Jesus, of the house of king David. (*Curtains are closed.*)

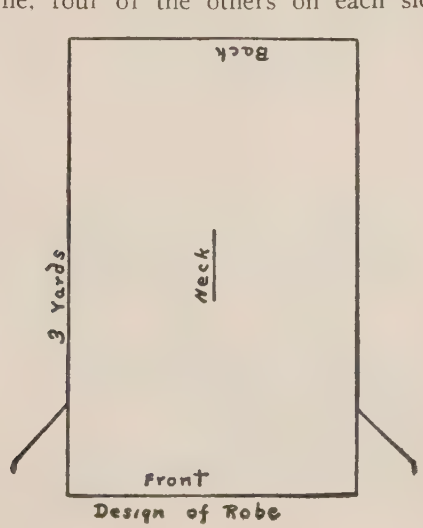
TAMAR. Blessed indeed is our Bethlehem, the home of Ruth, the home of David, the ruler of Judea, the birthplace of this Babe who comes as the Saviour of mankind. But come. Too long we tarry.

ZELMA. Let us fill our pitchers and turn homeward. (*They fill pitchers and start off.*)

CURTAIN

CANDLE LIGHTING TIME

For nine of the older girls. The tallest one is to be at center of line, four of the others on each side, with the



Design of Robe

shortest girls at ends of line. Center girl wears red, next on each side, light blue, the next pink, next on each side yellow, the end girls light green. To make robes use three yards of cheese cloth, cut a vertical slit at center for neck; slip over head. Have piece of tape at each side of front, tie these together in the back and let the back of robe fall over, as shown in cut. These are almost no work to make.

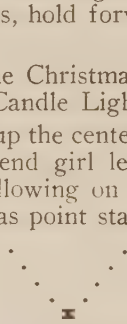
Each girl carries a candle. Get the white candles, whittle down end so they will fit firmly into neck of a catsup or other tall bottle. Cover the bottle with crepe paper to match robe, running the paper up well toward top of candle, finishing with a frilly double ruffle, kept in place by a snap rubber. Have the stage dimly lighted.

To rather slow music the file enters at corner of back, comes up side to front corner of stage, diagonally to center of back, same to other corner of front, down the side and forms in line across the back, lighted candles being held in right hand. Raise candles, hold forward and say:

ALL.

When comes the Christmas carols' chime,
We know 'tis Candle Lighting time.

The center girl comes up the center to front, holding candle in front of her. Each end girl leads diagonally to center front, the next three following on each line; they come up and with the center girl as point stand to form a



Those on left side face left, others face right, center girl faces front, holding her candle raised and forward. The others raise candles toward side of stage they face. Girl at front speaks:

Only a light in the shadows of night,
That gleams with a ray of cheer;
The hope of true living,
The joy of wide giving,
For Christmas, glad Christmas is here,
And as the bells their carols chime
Comes the Candle Lighting time.

The girl at the back of left line leads the four on her side across to the back of the right-hand line; at same time the girl on right side nearest the front, leads the file out to right corner of front, the center girl dropping into fifth place, then the other four following, thus giving the file its original order. They pass down right side, across back of stage, candles held breast high in front of body, then at left corner of back turn and double back to right corner; then form diagonally across to left corner of front, halting with candles held high in right hand. (Diagram 1.)

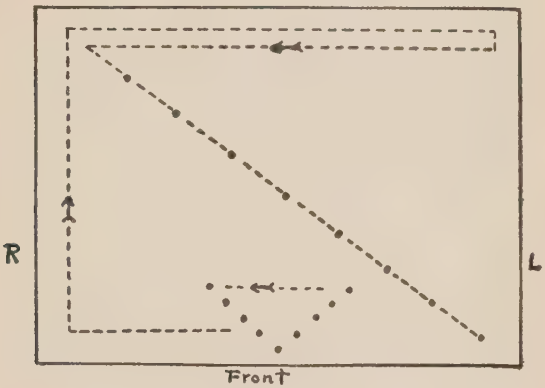


Diagram 1.

Girl at left corner front speaks:

December now and Christmastide
The year's great feast is keeping,
In honor of the Holy Child,
Once in a manger sleeping;
And candles shine as oft before,
To tell the Christmas story,
And in their rays of golden light
Reflect the Christmas glory.

The four girls nearest the front about face; the center girl passes diagonally to left corner back, the two who stood in front and behind her form couple and follow; the next

from each half of line move up, form couple and follow, then the others the same. Leader goes from left corner to center of back, then up and halts; the couples follow, the first going to right, next to left, and so on, taking positions with those of each couple facing, candles high and close together.

Position thus:

```
          x
      ><      ><
  ><              ><
```

The girl nearest right at front speaks:

The Christmas candles brightly glow,
  Symbol of the love supreme,
Which from the Lord of Heaven above,
  Shines on the earth with kindly beam;
And as mankind keeps holiday
  They shine with constant light,
To make, as we are taught to do,
  The Christmas world more bright.

The center girl comes up to center of front, the first couple at her right moves over and falls into line back of her, then couple on her left, next on the right, then on left. On reaching center of front the leader goes to right corner of front, couples following in order, down the right side, to center of back and up to center of stage where she halts. As she stops the others, beginning with couple at the back wheel out, those nearer center taking shorter steps, until the file is in original order in straight line across center of stage.

Wheel thus:

Diagram 2

The two end girls come forward and kneel; center girl kneels just back of them, her candle high; the others form

a semicircle, standing back of the three, holding candles forward. Kneeling girl who has not spoken says:

Oh merry day, the Christmas day,
When hearts rejoice and love holds sway;
The message Jesus came to bring,
Still lights the world with steady ray.
Ye weary one, ye sad and lone,
Find comfort in His love sublime;
Accept the peace He came to bring;
Be glad—'tis Candle Lighting time.

Center girl rises and moves back, kneeling girls rise and stand where they are, back to back, one facing right, other left; the other six form a line in front of center girl and back of the two, three of them facing right, and three the left. Center girl holds candle high; those facing left hold candle raised high to the left, the others to the right. One of the girls on middle row says:

A Christmas light once shone to lead
The wise men who would find,
Far off, across the desert sands,
The Saviour of mankind.
O Father, may the Christmas lights
Send forth a greeting sweet,
To guide the great heart of the world
To the Messiah's feet.

The center girl comes up the center to front, other moving to make way for her; the couples follow in order with the end girls last. From center of front go to right corner, down right side, to center of back; up to the center of stage where the center girl halts; the others form a circle about her, standing close together, facing out, candles held high, pointing up.

ALL SING (*Tune, "Onward, Christian Soldiers"*):

Light again the candles,
Christmas time is here,
Let them shine forth bravely,
Beacon lights of cheer;

Light the Christmas candles,
Set them all aglow,
Bringing Heaven's message
To the earth below.

CHORUS

Shine forth, Christmas candles,
Shine forth now and say
Jesus Christ our Saviour,
Comes again today.

Six girls kneel, lights held forward; center girl stands back of them, her candle forward, high; a girl stands on each side of her, half facing her, their candles toward her, lower than hers. Repeat the chorus softly.

The kneeling girls rise. They move to sides, part to right and others to left to place them in their original order, the others moving forward into the line. With candles held forward they say:

When comes the Christmas carols' chime
We know 'tis Candle Lighting time.

They turn to face side of stage and the one who led the file onto stage leads up the side to front, across front of stage, down the other side and off.

NOTE. Tunes mentioned in this book may be found in "Golden Book of Favorite Songs," 20 cents.